



**The Texas Children's Justice Act Project  
2009 Performance Report, Three-Year Assessment  
Report and Task Force Recommendations, and 2009-  
2010 Application for Funding  
May 30, 2009**



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Children's Justice Act Project  
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# 2009 Performance Report

## **Overview**

In July of 1989, the Governor of the Texas designated the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS), which then housed the child protective services program, as the entity to apply for and receive the state's Children's Justice Act (CJA) grant. In September of 1992, the state of Texas established the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) and the Child Protective Services program was transferred to this agency. The Governor subsequently named PRS as the entity to receive and administer CJA grant awards. In 2005, administration of the CJA award moved from PRS, now the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to the Texas Center for the Judiciary (Texas Center). In compliance with federal grant guidelines, the Texas Center implements the Task Force recommendations by awarding grants and providing staff support for Task Force driven projects.

The CJA project is supported primarily by one part-time and two full-time staff members, the CJA Project Director, Grant Monitor, and Finance Associate. CJA project staff is responsible for preparing the annual federal grant application, performance report and budget; managing grant awards; and supporting other CJA-related Task Force activities. Specifically, in partnership with the CJA Task Force, CJA project staff designs necessary processes to address identified needs, solicits grant applications and selects grant recipients, and monitors and supports project implementation, in a manner consistent with state and federal grant requirements. CJA funds are used to cover the salaries and fringe benefits of the CJA Project Director and CJA Grant Monitor, and an allocated share of salaries and fringe benefits of the Finance Associate and other support staff provided by the Texas Center. CJA funds also support an allocated portion of the Texas Center's staff travel, equipment and supplies, and contractual services. The CJA project staff reports to the Texas Center's Executive Director.

## **Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force**

### **Establishment and Purpose**

Texas received its first CJA grant in 1990, and since that time has maintained a multidisciplinary Task Force responsible for overseeing grant activities. The mission of the Texas CJA Task Force is to reform State systems and improve the process by which the State responds to cases of child abuse and neglect, thereby dealing more effectively with both the child victim and the offender and limiting additional trauma to the child victim. Specifically, the Task Force is responsible for evaluating the child-protection system, making recommendations for system improvements, monitoring the implementation of its recommendations, and continuing interagency collaboration in carrying out the intent of the CJA program.

### **Maintenance and Membership**

The CJA Task Force currently consists of 16 professionals with knowledge of the criminal justice system and the systems which handle child physical abuse, child neglect, child sexual abuse and exploitation, and child maltreatment related fatalities.<sup>1</sup> Members hold elections each

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for Task Force member biographical information.

July. Current vacancies in statutorily required categories of membership will be filled July 2009.<sup>2</sup>

The Task Force holds regular quarterly meetings and more frequent subcommittee meetings as needed. Through its regular meetings and frequent communication with CJA staff, the Task Force continues to take an active role in ensuring the effective administration of CJA funds. CJA funds are used to support the ongoing activities of the Task Force.

### **Project Activities (10/1/2007-9/30/2008)**

#### **Grant Administration**

During the grant period (10/1/2007-9/30/2008), the Task Force received \$1,305,254 in CJA FFY07 funds and carried forward \$154,398.14 unspent FFY06 funds from the prior grant year for a total of \$1,459,652.14 in grant income (see Table 1 below). During the applicable grant period, payments made were made from FFY06 funds first, and then from FFY07 funds.

**Table 1**

<b>Grant Income (10/1/2007-9/30/2008)</b>	
FFY06 Funds	\$ 154,398.14
FFY07 Funds	\$1,305,254.00
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>\$1,459,652.14</b>

The CJA Task Force awarded 7 grants and 12 scholarships totaling \$1,140,069.50. A list of funded projects is shown below in Table 2.

**Table 2**

<b>Grant Funded Projects (10/1/2007-9/30/2008)</b>	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award</b>
CASA of Hidalgo 5 <sup>th</sup> Annual Advocacy Training Conference - Representing Children in CPS Cases: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Advocacy	\$ 3,000.00
Bluebonnet CAC 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Ad Litem Training Seminar	\$ 4,500.00
Texas CASA Quality Advocacy and Volunteer Recruitment	\$230,997.00
CAC of Texas, Inc. Strengthening CAC MDTs and Cultivating Leadership	\$ 91,638.00
Alamo CAC Annual Training Conference, Medical Training Program, and Child Welfare Strategic Alliance	\$122,496.00
Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Texas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children	\$193,058.42
The Shaken Baby Alliance Child Abuse and SIDS Program	\$199,997.00
Scholarships for Child-Protection Professionals to Attend Trainings	\$ 6,183.00
<b>Total Funds Awarded</b>	<b>\$851,869.42</b>

### **Application and Review Process**

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix B for Task Force membership by statutorily-required disciplines.

Projects funded during this grant period were continuations from the prior grant year which met the Task Force’s 2007-2008 recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

The Task Force Grant Proposal Review Committee reviewed all continuation applications and met via conference call to discuss the proposals and formulate its funding recommendations. The committee presented, and the full Task Force approved, the committee’s recommendations at the CJA Task Force meeting, September 28, 2007.

**Impact Summary**

The CJA Task Force continues to explore ways in which to measure the statewide impact of its activities. To this end, CJA subgrantees must develop as part of their application for funding specific measure for evaluating program performance. Given the wide array of CJA projects, developing standardized performance measures to evaluate the total impact of CJA activities on children and families remains a challenge. However, key data indicators collected by the subgrantees during the applicable reporting period indicate CJA activities have impacted a large number of child-protection professionals and volunteers (see Table 3).

**Table 3**

<b>FFY2008 Impact Summary</b>	
Number of training events held	79
Number of professionals and volunteers trained	5,084
Number of new CASA volunteers recruited	269
Number of CASA volunteers retained	3,276
<b>Total number of professionals and volunteers impacted</b>	<b>8,629</b>

**Project Outcomes**

During the applicable reporting period, the CJA Task Force funded a number of projects designed to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases and to further the CJA Task Force 2007-2008 recommendations. A summary of CJA activities and associated outcomes for this reporting period follows:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Annual Advocacy Training Conference - Representing Children in CPS Cases: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Advocacy	\$3,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
CASA of Hidalgo County, Inc. is the local CASA program providing volunteer advocates for abused and neglected children in Hidalgo County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Advocacy Training Conference, October 18-19, 2007. Attendees included CPS workers, law enforcement, social workers, CASA staff and volunteer advocates, and school personnel. Topics included the dynamics of abuse and neglect, domestic violence, poverty, culturally-competent care, drug abuse, and mental illness.</li> </ul>	

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix C for CJA Task Force 2007-2009 Recommendations.

<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 attorneys and 56 other child-protection professionals trained.</li> <li>• 100% of attendees reported a good or excellent learning experience on conference evaluations.</li> </ul>

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Ad Litem Training Seminar	\$4,500
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Bluebonnet Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) is a nonprofit umbrella organization supporting both the local multidisciplinary team and CASA program in Medina, Uvalde, and Real County areas.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
Delivered 2nd Annual Ad Litem Training Seminar, September 5, 2008 in Hondo, TX. Dr. David Arredondo delivered the keynote address, “The Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development.”	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 child-protection professionals trained.</li> <li>• 98% of attendees responded positively to questions regarding the structure and content of the conference.</li> <li>• Over 90% of attendees rated the keynote address a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Quality Advocacy and Volunteer Recruitment	\$230,997
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Texas CASA, Inc. is a nonprofit advocating for abused and neglected children in the court system through the development, growth, and support of local CASA programs.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(3-4).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<b>Quality Advocacy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed statewide judicial survey to inform local program practice and improve outcomes and permanency for children.</li> <li>• Provided immediate assistance and individual and on-site follow up to all CASA programs experiencing managerial turn over.</li> <li>• Coordinated formal mentoring program, pairing tenured executive directors with new directors.</li> <li>• Updated statistical data collection pages on Texas CASA website to make more user friendly and to eliminate redundant information.</li> <li>• Sent new instructional manual to local programs regarding data reporting.</li> <li>• Worked with local CASAs to identify training needs regarding COMET data collection system.</li> </ul>	

- Worked with National CASA to coordinate the ability of the COMET system with the data identified in CASA standards.

**Volunteer Recruitment**

- Developed and conducted 12 regional customized media trainings assist participants in developing news hooks for print, television and radio.
- Provided ongoing support to local programs as needed, including crisis management assistance.
- Developed and launched new volunteer recruitment website, [www.becomeacasa.org](http://www.becomeacasa.org).
- Provided network press advisories, alerts, and tips to assist with volunteer recruitment to local programs.
- Created a PSA to assist with volunteer recruitment. The PSA aired during the months of April and May with over 1,000 spots in prime time on Time Warner.
- Conducted 7 interviews during statewide radio tour.

**Outcomes**

**Quality Advocacy**

- 14 new directors received training and/or mentoring assistance as part of new formal mentoring program.
- New directors and their local program had fewer non-compliance findings.
- 100% of directors with non-compliance findings received assistance resulting in the achievement of compliance or a comprehensive plan for reaching compliance.
- 100% of local program staff agreed or strongly agreed that the assistance received was relevant, effective, professional, and met their expectations.

**Volunteer Recruitment**

- 58 staff received customized regional media training.
- A local CASA program managed a potential PR nightmare when a CASA volunteer was accused of sexual assault. The urban CASA program involved delivered relevant facts to the media demonstrating that the program had followed all guidelines to ensure the safety of the children it served. As a result, the program actually received more inquiries from the community on how they could help protect children by becoming a CASA volunteer.
- The new recruitment website, [www.becomeacasa.org](http://www.becomeacasa.org), received more than 100 inquiries.
- The number of new CASA volunteers recruited increased from 1,714 in FY2007 to 1,983 in FY2008.
- The number of CASA volunteers retained increased from 3,214 in FY2007 to 3,276 in FY 2009.

Project Name	Award Amount
Strengthening CAC MDTs and Cultivating Leadership	\$91,638
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. (CACTX) is the statewide membership association, representing all local children's advocacy centers (CACs) in Texas. CACTX provides training and technical assistance to local CACs to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and restore the lives of abused children.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	

## Activities this reporting period

### Team Facilitation Training

- Delivered 1 Team Facilitation Training for professionals responsible for facilitating multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings and relationships within the CAC setting.

### Team Leadership Training

- Delivered 1 Team Leadership Training for participants from four established CAC MDTS facing common challenges. Each seven member team included at least one professional from the following core disciplines: prosecution, law enforcement, CPS, medical and mental health, as well as a forensic interview or other key program staff position, and the executive director or CAC program director.

### Advanced MDT Trainings

- Delivered 2 Advanced MDT Trainings for the Johnson County and Port Lavaca CACs, respectively.

### Executive Director Networking Forums

- Delivered 3 Executive Director Networking Forums for executive directors from CACs of similar size and scope.

## Outcomes

### Team Facilitation Training

- 18 team facilitators trained.
- According to post training evaluations, attendees experienced change in their knowledge and attitudes regarding team dynamics and intended to change their behaviors as well. As a result of the training, one participant commented she would *“not assume as much as I have in the past! Recognize that I need to take ownership in the functioning of the MDT and begin to model positive behaviors”* and *“pay closer attention to language when working with others.”* Another participant commented, *“I didn’t realize until this training how important my role is as a facilitator and how the team works together makes all the difference.”* One participant noted, *“My attitude has changed in the sense that I am no longer pointing fingers at everything bad. I believe there are good things about our MDT and things that could be better. Instead of there are bad things and things not so bad.”*

### Team Leadership Training

- 29 participants representing four established CAC MDTS facing common challenges received training.
- 100% of participants reported the training increased their knowledge on strengthening CAC MDTS.
- Evaluations indicated participants learned many things including, diverse social/personality styles both help and hinder the team, team culture can change but everyone must do their part to make a difference, team members must understand differences in order to work together, and effective communication is essential. One person reported she *“learned a lot about myself and others”* and another attendee indicated he would take with him a wealth of new ideas to share with others at his local CAC, as well as to enhance his own life.
- Six months following the training, participants were asked about attitude and action changes they had made as a result of the Team Leadership experience. Some changes included, *“[I’ve] been more prompt to meetings, participated more as a team, less as an individual, and been less hesitant to share information,”* and *“[I] make a point to visit*

*CAC more, have improved working relationships with members, am more honest when problems arise and feel more comfortable discussing them.*” When asked about attitude and action changes among their team members, many participants reported more participation, involvement, and commitment among team members.

**Advanced MDT Trainings**

- 22 MDT members trained.
- According to the executive directors of the two participating CACs, the training was very meaningful and had a significant impact on the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of the team. One director stated that *“the team began implementing changes almost immediately in communication and suggestions on ways to improve investigative and intervention protocol.”*

**Executive Director Networking Forums**

- 26 participants engaged in facilitated dialogue, idea sharing, peer support and mini-trainings.
- On post-session evaluations attendees indicated the Networking Forums would positively impact their specific work as a CAC director and they felt the opportunity to share experiences, information, and ideas with their peers was invaluable. As one attendee stated, *“[The Forum was] very helpful. Meeting people face-to-face makes it much easier to pick up the phone and call for support when needed.”* Many reported feeling motivated, re-charged, and positively impacted in the way they were able to contribute to, and learn from, the group. Attendees found it helpful that so many new ideas and techniques were shared among the directors and expressed excitement about returning to their respective communities to implement new strategies.

Project Name	Award Amount
Annual Training Conference, Medical Training Program, and Child Welfare Strategic Alliance	\$122,496
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Alamo Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC), dba ChildSafe is a local CAC serving children and families in Bexar County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2) and B(1).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<p><b>Annual Training Conference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered Annual Training Conference for a multidisciplinary audience of child-protection professionals. Sessions included Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Peer Review, Wireless Crimes Against Children, Legal Issues in Child Abuse, Abdominal Injuries in Abused Children, Drug Endangered Children and Case Prosecution, Missing and Abducted Children, and more.</li> </ul> <p><b>Medical Training Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided medical training to professionals, including licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), pediatric residents and third year medial students from the United States Air Force (USAF) Wilford Hall Medical Center, and SANEs from across the state.</li> </ul> <p><b>Child Welfare Strategic Alliance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffed 426 cases and served 1,752 clients who have experienced sexual abuse or severe</li> </ul>	

physical abuse, including conducting 1,322 forensic interviews and 105 medical exams; providing case coordination to 396 clients; enrolling 363 clients in to the CARE Program; adding 5 small law enforcement jurisdictions to the MDT; and entering all case information into the CACTX database.

**Outcomes**

**Annual Training Conference**

- 370 child-protection professionals trained.
- When asked to evaluate the usefulness of the material presented and the effectiveness of the program presenters, 90% of conference attendees rated the event as excellent or very good.

**Medical Training Program**

- 118 medical professionals received a total of 858 hours of training.

**Child Welfare Strategic Alliance**

- Of the cases staffed by the alliance in which a disposition has been reported, 64% were found to be Reason to Believe for abuse.
- 79% of cases taken to Grand Jury were indicted.
- Investigations were completed in 3.5 months. This is less than half the time it takes to complete a case investigation using a traditional, non-MDT process.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Texas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children	\$193,058.42

**Subgrantee**

Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health, safety and productivity of citizens in the North Texas area by reducing the incidence and impact of alcohol and drug abuse.

**Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)**

Project supports recommendations A(1-4), B(1, 3, and 5).

**Activities this reporting period**

**Training Initiatives**

- Delivered five Regional Training Institutes in Houston, El Paso, Dallas, Lufkin, and San Antonio.
- Delivered 1 stakeholder training to representatives from the Department of State Health Services, Department of Family and Protective Services, Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas, Texas Department of Public Safety, Senator Whitmire’s office, Texas District and County Attorneys Association, Texas PTA, Texas Municipal Police Association, Texas Center for the Judiciary, National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children and the TADEC steering committee.
- Conducted 7 community trainings for Rusk, Harris, Travis, and El Paso counties; the Arrow Project; Arlington CPS; and as part of the Crimes Against Children Conference in Dallas.
- Presented five Meth 360 programs for Dallas ISD, the Hispanic Business Alliance, Adult Probation, Quilan ISD, and the Municipal Police Chiefs Association.
- Held 1 Faculty Train the Trainer event providing four hours of instruction on the new TADEC curriculum.
- Conducted 4 Children’s Program Kit trainings.

<p><b>Technical Assistance, Case Consultation Services, and Website Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispensed technical assistance daily.</li> <li>• Provided case consultation through the webform on the TADEC website. Continuously updated website as new trainings were scheduled and files were revised.</li> <li>• Added quarterly newsletter to website.</li> <li>• Distributed 3 online quarterly newsletters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>
<p><b>Training Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91.1% of training attendees who completed a training evaluation reported the training had an impact of their perspective. 80.4% reported the training impacted their perspective by providing new information.</li> <li>• Over 2,200 professionals and stakeholders reached through training activities.</li> <li>• Train the trainer attendees are conducting trainings within their communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Technical Assistance, Case Consultation Services, and Website Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources for professionals involved with drug endangered children updated and further developed.</li> <li>• Each case evaluated and information disseminated to the appropriate agency or contact.</li> <li>• Online quarterly newsletters distributed to more than 2,000 stakeholders.</li> </ul>

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Child Abuse and SIDS Program	\$199,997
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
The Shaken Baby Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing quality, accurate, and up to date information and training programs to professionals from multidisciplinary fields on Shaken Baby Syndrome, serious physical child abuse, and SIDS.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-3).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<p><b>Curriculum Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained commitments from select professionals to serve on the program and curriculum development teams.</li> <li>• Identified the needs of child abuse professionals and determined how best to meet needs through training.</li> <li>• Identified and contracted with program staff and training team members.</li> <li>• Developed new curriculum, updated existing curriculum, and developed PowerPoint programs to use in training specifically targeted at medical professionals, law enforcement, CPS, Child Care Licensing, child advocates, and lawyers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Advanced Investigations Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered 13, two-day Advanced Investigation trainings for child-protection professionals. Curriculum included SIDS vs. homicide, medical aspects of child abuse, forensic investigation techniques, scene investigation and photography, interview and interrogation, timeline development, legal aspects of investigation, and tools you can use to improve investigations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Requested Training by Professionals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered 19 trainings at the request of professionals to various investigators, legal</li> </ul>	

professionals, and community groups.

**Three-Day Conference on Child Abuse**

- Delivered 1, three-day conference on child abuse, child death, and drug endangered children at the Omni Hotel San Antonio.

**Technical Assistance and Case Consultation**

- Provided technical assistance and case consultation services to investigative and legal professionals requesting assistance on cases of child maltreatment, sexual abuse and child deaths, including assisting with case review and organization, the preparation of demonstrative evidence, timeline development, and document development.
- Provided legal counsel for several cases through the Alliance’s staff attorney.

**Outcomes**

**Advanced Investigations Training**

- 1,144 child-protection professionals trained.
- Participant evaluations averaged 6.5 on a 7 point scaled.
- Participant comments showed the training was beneficial to them in their respective roles in child abuse cases. When participants were asked which part of the training they found most beneficial, many responded, “All of it!”

**Additional Requested Training by Professionals**

- 729 professionals trained.

**Three-Day Conference on Child Abuse**

- 132 professionals trained. Attendance was heavily impacted by FLDS crisis.

**Technical Assistance and Case Consultation**

- Over 100 investigative and legal professionals assisted.

Project Name				Award Amount
Scholarships for Child-Protection Professionals to Attend Training Events				\$6,183
Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)				
Project supports recommendations A(2).				
Recipient	Event	Date(s)	Location	Number of Participants Supported
Texas CASA, Inc.	11 <sup>th</sup> National Child Welfare Data and Technology Conference	7/20-7/22/2008	Washington D.C.	1
El Paso Human Services, Inc.	American Humane’s 2008 Conference on Family Group Decision Making	6/3-6/6/2008	Tucson, AZ	2
Gregg County	Travis County Drug Court Site Visit and Seminar	4/30-4/1/2008	Austin, TX	9
<b>Total Number of Participants Supported</b>				<b>12</b>

**Project Activities (10/1/2008-3/31/2009)**

**Grant Administration**

For applicable grant period (10/1/2008-9/30/2009), the Task Force received \$1,356,331 in CJA FFY08 funds and carried forward \$416,490.25 in unspent FFY07 funds, for total grant income of \$1,772,821.25 (see Table 4 below). During this reporting period, payments were made from FFY07 funds first, and then from FFY08 funds.

**Table 4**

<b>Grant Income (10/1/2008-9/30/2009)</b>	
FFY07 Funds	\$ 416,490.25
FFY08 Funds	\$1,356,331.00
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>\$1,772,821.25</b>

The CJA Task Force awarded 26 grants and 92 scholarships totaling \$1,353,021.25. A list of funded projects is shown below in Table 5.

**Table 5**

<b>Grant Funded Projects (10/1/2008-3/31/2009)</b>	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award</b>
Nueces County CAC Support and Expansion	\$ 75,000.00
Dallas CAC Forensic Interviewer and Case-Intake System Upgrade	\$ 65,700.00
Abilene Police Department Forensic Interviewer (CAC) of Hidalgo Border Starr Kids	\$ 42,909.00
CAC of Smith County Kids in Court (KIC) Court School	\$ 96,421.00
Rusk County CAC	\$ 45,789.00
Zero To Three Fort Bend County Court Team for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers	\$ 8,000.00
Texas CASA Inc. Quality CASA Advocacy and Volunteer Recruitment	\$ 69,362.00
CASA of Trinity Valley Volunteer Recruitment	\$ 251,916.00
Navarro County CAC	\$ 43,036.00
CAC of Tom Green County CASA Permanency Plan	\$ 24,625.00
Texas Foster Families Association Annual Training Conference	\$ 50,000.00
Texas Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders-Intervention Training	\$ 12,372.00
Northeast Texas CAC MDT Capacity Building	\$ 61,129.00
CACTX Strengthening CAC MDTs and Leadership	\$ 7,474.00
Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Texas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children	\$ 97,267.00
TCU Institute of Child Development Texas Judicial Summit	\$ 99,999.00
University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio Accidental and Inflicted Mechanisms of Injury in Children: A CD ROM for investigative, legal, and law enforcement professionals	\$ 57,125.00
CASA of Hidalgo County, Inc. 6th Annual Training Conference: Representing Children in DFPS Cases: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Advocacy	\$ 141,750.00
Henderson County HELP Center 2009 MDT Training	\$ 3,000.00
	\$ 3,140.50

Gregg County Family Law Council Training: Techniques to Aid those Working with the Attachment Challenges of Children in the Foster Care System	\$ 986.39
CAC of Denton County 2009 Team Retreat	\$ 3,114.00
CAC of Van Zandt, Inc. Advanced Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Training and Assessment	\$ 5,000.00
Center for Child Protection Protecting Children, Saving Lives	\$ 5,000.00
Center for Child Protection Compliant Victims - An Uncomfortable Reality	\$ 3,400.00
Scholarships for Child Protection Professionals to Attend Trainings	\$ 79,506.36
<b>Total Funds Awarded</b>	<b>\$1,353,021.25</b>

### Application and Review Process

The Task Force granted 17 awards totaling \$1,137,503 through a widespread competitive grant solicitation process. Eligible applicants included state agencies, local government entities, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions. The funding notice was posted to the Task Force website at [www.texascja.org](http://www.texascja.org). The Task Force received over 40 applications. CJA staff evaluated each application based on completeness and content using the CJA Application Review Sheet developed for this purpose. The Task Force Grant Proposal Review Committee reviewed staff's evaluations, discussed each application, and finalized each score by consensus. The committee recommended and the Task Force approved all projects scoring above 76 for funding.

In addition to the competitive solicitation process, the Task Force set aside \$250,000 for projects that would arise during the grant period. These projects would be subject to the same evaluation process and would have to score above 76 to be recommended for funding. The Task Force granted 2 awards, totaling \$112,371 from these funds.

The Task Force then allocated the remaining funds to support small (less than \$5,000) training-related grants and scholarships. From these funds, the Task Force granted 7 awards and 92 scholarships, totaling \$103,147.25.

### Impact Summary

Key data indicators collected by the subgrantees during the applicable reporting period (10/1/2008-3/31/2009) indicate CJA activities thus far have impacted a large number of children, families, professionals and volunteers (see Table 6).

Table 6

<b>FFY2009 Impact Summary</b>	
Number of forensic interviews conducted	346
Number of clients served by Family Advocates	615
Number of children who attended court school	11
Number of infants and toddlers served by model court team	15
Number of stakeholders who attended monthly court team meetings	45
Number of PMC cases evaluated	53
Number of new CASA volunteers recruited to local programs	33

Number of local CASA programs which received technical assistance	40
Number of training events held	26
Number of professionals and volunteers trained <sup>4</sup>	2,338

### Project Outcomes

During the applicable reporting period (10/1/2008-3/31/2009), the CJA Task Force funded a number of projects designed to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases and to further the 2008-2009 CJA Task Force Recommendations. A summary of CJA activities and associated outcomes for this reporting period follows:

#### **Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) Expansion and Support Projects - \$280,030**

Local CACs strive to provide an innovative, comprehensive, and coordinated approach to child maltreatment cases through activities such as investigative forensic interviews, multidisciplinary case reviews, victims' assistance services, and data collection. In support of these activities, the Task Force supported the following local CAC projects:

Project Name	Award Amount
CAC Support and Expansion	\$75,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Nueces County Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is a local CAC serving maltreated children and their non offending caregivers in Nueces County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hired new forensic interviewer and victim's assistant.</li> <li>New interviewer attended CACTX Block I and II Forensic Interviewer trainings.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>236 interviews conducted to date by new interviewer. This represents 26.17% of the caseload – On track to meet target.</li> <li>615 clients to date served by new Victim's Assistant. This represents 52.56% of the caseload – On track to meet target.</li> </ul>	

Project Name	Award Amount
Forensic Interviewer and Case-Intake System Upgrade	\$65,700
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is a local CAC serving maltreated children and their non offending caregivers in Dallas County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1) and B(6).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hired new forensic interviewer.</li> <li>New interviewer observed approx. 40 interviews, read current and past literature in the field and attended CACTX Block I and II Forensic Interviewer trainings.</li> </ul>	

<sup>4</sup> Includes data from all CJA programs with a training component.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held multiple meetings with stakeholders to discuss needs requirements and potential vendors for case-intake system upgrade.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75 interviews to date conducted by new interviewer.</li> </ul>

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Forensic Interviewer	\$42,909
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Abilene Police Department is a local governmental entity working to enhance the quality of life for citizens of the city of Abilene.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hired new forensic interviewer in January.</li> <li>New interviewer completed training.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35 interviews to date conducted by new interviewer. This represents 16 % of caseload. Interviewer has taken over 75% of interviews since hire – On track to meet target.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Border Starr Kids	\$96,421
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) of Hidalgo is the local CAC serving child abuse victims and their non offending family members in Hidalgo County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2), and C(1).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<p><b>Forensic Interviewer and Family Advocate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hired one Forensic Interviewer January 20, 2009.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaboration and Protocol Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created MDT for case reviews in Starr County consisting of CPS, law enforcement, mental health, a sexual assault nurse examiner, and domestic violence crisis center. MDT is conducting monthly reviews.</li> <li>Participated in discussion with partner agencies regarding a shared protocol for cross-discipline collaboration for Starr and Hidalgo counties.</li> <li>Delivered 1 MDT training session, March 31, 2009.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<p><b>Forensic Interviewer and Family Advocate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data not yet reported.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaboration and Protocol Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No data to report yet.</li> </ul> <p><b>MDT Training Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>44 MDT members trained – Met target.</li> <li>Overall respondents rated the conference 4.8 out of 5.</li> </ul>	

- 89% of respondents reported above average or excellent to every question asked on the post conference evaluation. Participants reported, “*The presentations were very informative,*” and “[*t*]he presenters seemed very knowledgeable about their field of expertise.”

**Court School Project - \$53,789**

Court is a scary process for most adults, and it can be terrifying for children. Court school programs provide age-appropriate educational activities to prepare child abuse victims and their families for the court process and to reduce the stress and anxiety that accompanies testifying in court. The Task Force supported the following court school projects:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Kids in Court (KIC)	\$45,789
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children’s Advocacy Center of Smith County (CACSC) is a local children’s advocacy center (CAC) serving maltreated children and their non offending caregivers in Smith County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1), A(3), B(1) and B(5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired and trained Kids In Court (KIC) Coordinator.</li> <li>• Created case tracking database.</li> <li>• Scheduled meetings with DA's Office to encourage coordination.</li> <li>• Developed appropriate court curriculum.</li> <li>• Created appropriate learning environment for children.</li> <li>• Educated staff on legal process and court testimony in Smith County.</li> <li>• Coordinated volunteers from the CACSC to provide court accompaniment for clients.</li> <li>• Administered pre-court surveys to clients.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of clients expressed satisfaction with how CACSC kept them informed of their case progress - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 81 recorded contacts with DAs Office - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 7 children have received court preparation instruction.</li> <li>• Initial survey results show satisfaction with the quantity and quality of communication between CACSC and DA’s Office – On track to meet target.</li> <li>• No data available yet on stress reduction and victims' rights knowledge.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Court School	\$8,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Rusk County Children’s Advocacy Center is a local children’s advocacy center (CAC) serving victims of child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse, and child witnesses of violent crimes and their non-offending family members in Rusk and Panola counties.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(3), B(3), and B(5).	

<b>Activities this reporting period</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchased court room models.</li> <li>• Purchased books to provide to court school participants and other materials.</li> <li>• Initiated court school.</li> <li>• Conducted court room tours for all court school participants.</li> <li>• Distributed educational materials to all court school participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of children served have shown a decrease in stress level as measured before and after attending court school - Exceeding target. Children reported feeling more relaxed and prepared following court school than before.</li> <li>• 100% of caretakers surveyed report a positive change in the child's behavior as a result of the court school - Exceeding target. Caretakers reported a reduction in stress exhibited in their children.</li> <li>• 75% of children showed an increase in knowledge about court rooms and procedures as measured on a pre and post court school test – Currently below target. Children reported that television shows had already made them knowledgeable about the court system.</li> <li>• 2 cases have used child testimony during the reporting period – Currently below target.</li> <li>• 4 children have been served by court school project. There was a significant time lag between the beginning of the grant cycle and the receipt of the court room models. Grantee anticipates serving many more children during the remainder of the grant period.</li> </ul>

### **Model Court Team Project \$69,362**

Infants and toddlers comprise the largest cohort of abused and neglected children nationwide.<sup>5</sup> In Texas, during fiscal year 2008, nearly 40% of confirmed child abuse and neglect victims were age three years or younger.<sup>6</sup> These children are most vulnerable to the effects of maltreatment, and its impact on all aspects of their development can have life-long implications, if not properly addressed. Zero To Three's model court teams for maltreated infants and toddlers strive to improve outcomes for this vulnerable population by utilizing cross-systems collaboration to enact comprehensive approaches to promptly and effectively address the critical needs of infants and toddlers.<sup>7</sup> The Task Force funded the following model court team project:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Fort Bend County Court Team for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers	\$69,362
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
ZERO TO THREE (ZTT) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to informing, training and supporting professionals, policymakers and parents in their efforts to improve the lives of infants and toddlers.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-3), B(1-3), and B(5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/CourtTeamsImpactStatement.pdf?docID=2525>.

<sup>6</sup> CPS Data Book 2008.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/CourtTeamsImpactStatement.pdf?docID=2525>.

**Service Provision**

- Enrolled and served 15 new infants and toddlers in the Court Team program.

**Collaboration**

- Convened 5 court team meetings (10/2/2008, 12/18/2008, 1/22/2009, 2/26/2009, 3/26/2009)
- Met with the Fort Bend County Transportation Department Director to discuss collaboration with the Court Team project to explore the feasibility of combining services within a geographical area to facilitate access (12/16/2008).
- Convened meetings with service providers to expand capacity for infant mental health services.
- Attended meeting with representatives from three major Early Childhood Intervention programs that serve Fort Bend and surrounding areas to discuss current referral process and identify other barriers to service delivery. Other participants included CPS, CASA, and the county attorney's office.

**Expansion**

- Conducted consulting site visits in Bexar and Harris counties.

**Training**

- Conducted 3 training sessions on the developmental impact of maltreatment on infants and toddlers.

**Outcomes****Service Provision**

- Enrolled 15 infants and toddlers in the Court Team program, 100% of all new 0-3 CPS cases in Fort Bend County – On track to meet target.
- Average over 3 parent-child visits per week. 10 of the children are placed with relatives – Exceeding target.
- Average number of placements is 1.4 – Exceeding target.
- 87% of children received ECI evaluations – Currently below target.
- Of the newly admitted cases, only 6% are receiving parent-child relationship therapy – Currently below target. There is a lack of trained providers. The Court Team is working to identify and train providers in parent-child relationship assessments and interventions.

**Collaboration**

- Over 45 stakeholders are attending monthly court team meetings. Each meeting brings an additional provider resource to the court team.
- 6 new service providers have been added to the court team roster – Exceeding target.

**Expansion**

- 3 courts in Harris County are showing interest in the Court Team model.

**Training**

- 450 professionals trained – Exceeding target.
- 100% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge of the developmental impact of maltreatment on infants and toddlers – Exceeding target.

**Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Development Programs - \$319,577**

CASA volunteers play an important role in the child-protection system helping abused and neglected children secure safe, permanent homes. Unfortunately, there are simply not enough volunteers to advocate for every child. In an effort to move one step closer to being able to

provide every abused and neglected child a well-trained, volunteer advocate, the Task Force funded the following CASA development projects:

Project Name	Award Amount
Quality CASA Advocacy and Volunteer Recruitment	\$251,916
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Texas CASA, Inc. is a nonprofit advocating for abused and neglected children in the court system through the development, growth, and support of local CASA programs.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1), A(3), and A(4)	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided technical assistance to 26 programs identified as having non compliance issues.</li> <li>• Provided technical assistance to 10 programs experiencing significant change or critical challenge.</li> <li>• Provided 4 programs with technical assistance with COMET and statistical reporting requirements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training and Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held PMC Stakeholder Meeting.</li> <li>• Monitored PMC pilots in Beaumont and Austin.</li> <li>• Distributed executive summary of judicial survey and conducted volunteer survey.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tell the CASA Story</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented statewide word of mouth volunteer recruitment campaign.</li> <li>• Created 12 month media calendar to provide the network with newsworthy story lines, print, tips, best practices and other supporting materials.</li> <li>• Implemented regional radio tour. Executive Director spokespersons delivered 12-15 radio interviews reaching 1.5 million listeners.</li> <li>• Exhibited "Stand Up for Abused Children Display" on courthouse lawns across the state.</li> <li>• Aired "Give Hope and Help" PSA statewide on Time Warner Cable.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48% of programs identified as having non compliance issues have come into full compliance – Currently below target.</li> <li>• 30% of programs identified as experiencing a significant change or critical challenge did not experience any decrease in children receiving advocacy - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 40% of programs identified as experiencing a significant change or critical challenge did not experience decrease in active volunteers - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 96% of recipients of technical assistance reported a high degree of satisfaction with the services – Exceeding target.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training and Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No data to report, yet.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tell the CASA Story</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 896 new volunteers have been trained - Exceeding target.</li> </ul>	

Overall number of active volunteers has actually fallen from 5259 to 4614 – Currently below target.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Volunteer Recruitment	\$43,036
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
CASA of Trinity Valley is a local CASA program serving Henderson, Anderson, and Cherokee Counties.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(3) and B(5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired volunteer recruitment coordinator.</li> <li>• Implemented mass media campaign - mailed 1,000 newsletters, printed 8 articles, conducted 5 radio interviews, gave 9 presentations, hosted 4 volunteer recruitment booth, and mailed more than 55 volunteer applications.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 new volunteers recruited. Only 4 new volunteers were recruited during the same time period last year – Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 4% increase in number of children with volunteer advocates - Currently below target.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Child Abuse Improvement Project	\$24,625
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Navarro County Children's Advocacy Center is a local children's advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending family members in Navarro County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(3) and B(5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired volunteer recruitment coordinator.</li> <li>• Conducted volunteer recruitment activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 new volunteers recruited.</li> <li>• 20% increase in the number of applications submitted by potential volunteers – Currently below target.</li> <li>• 12% increase in the number of volunteers attending training - Currently below target.</li> <li>• 18% increase in the number of volunteers advocating for children - Currently below target.</li> <li>• 87% of children in care assigned a volunteer - Currently below target.</li> <li>• 15% increase in number of reported volunteer hours spent advocating for children - Currently below target.</li> <li>• 11% increase in the number of medical and educational impacts made for children in foster care - Currently below target.</li> </ul>	

**Permanent Managing Conservatorship Programs - \$50,000**

In Texas, during fiscal year 2008, more than 14,000 children and youth were in the permanent managing conservatorship (PMC) of the State. In nearly 4,000 of these cases, parental rights had not yet been terminated. This issue was identified as a cross-cutting concern and barrier to permanency in the State’s most recent Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). To help address this significant problem, the Task Force funded the following permanency pilot project:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
CASA Permanency Plan	\$50,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children's Advocacy Center of Tom Green County is a local children’s advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending caregivers in Tom Green County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations B(3), B(5), and C(1).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained list of PMC cases from DFPS.</li> <li>• Prepared court orders for district judge's signature.</li> <li>• Evaluated each case file and met with each caseworker.</li> <li>• Contacted relatives, placements, and treatment facilities when appropriate.</li> <li>• Met with each child when appropriate.</li> <li>• Staffed each case with program director and volunteers.</li> <li>• Attended hearings, permanency conferences, Circle of Support meetings, and final adoption hearings.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluated 53 cases - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 53 cases received CASA reappointment - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 94% of cases of children not available for adoption set for TPR - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 83% of children available for adoption placed on TARE - Exceeding target.</li> <li>• 83% of children in adoptive placements set for adoption hearing – Currently below target.</li> <li>• 81% of all children evaluated placed in permanent home – Exceeding target.</li> </ul>	

**Training Programs - \$421,250.53**

CJA-funded training opportunities are designed to increase the knowledge and enhance the performance of child-protection professionals and volunteers. By targeting multidisciplinary audiences, CJA training events seek to create a shared vision of child advocacy among the many disjunctive bureaucracies involved in child protection, leading to a more comprehensive and effective handling of child maltreatment cases. Table 7 below provides a summary of CJA-funded training events.

**Table 7**

<b>Summary of all Training Events</b>			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Attendees</b>
Texas Foster Families Association Annual	10/2-10/4/08	San Antonio	723

Training Conference			
CASA of Hidalgo 6th Annual Training Conference: Representing Children in DFPS Cases: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Advocacy	10/2-10/3/08	Edinburg	280
Children's Advocacy Center of Texas (CACTX) Executive Director Networking Forums	10/6/08 11/11/08 11/14/08 11/19/08	Austin Austin Austin Austin	41
CACTX MDT Orientation Trainings	10/14/08 2/19/09	Kaufman Eastland	54
CACTX Advanced Forensic Interview Training	10/27/08	Austin	64
CACTX Advanced MDT Training	11/5/08 5/21/09	Abilene Amarillo	20
CACTX MDT Leadership Trainings	1/14-1/16/09 3/30-4/1/09	Austin Austin	66
Techniques to Aid those Working with the Attachment Challenges of Children in the Foster Care System	1/16-1/17/09	Longview	291
CACTX Train the Trainer	3/11-3/12/09	Austin	9
CAC of Denton County Team Retreat	3/27/09	Denton	45
CAC of Hidalgo MDT Training <sup>8</sup>	3/31/09	Edinburg	44
Henderson County HELP Center's 2009 MDT Training	4/2-4/3/09	Athens	38
Protecting Children, Saving Lives	4/8-4/10/09	Austin	110
Van Zandt Advanced MDT Training and Assessment	5/4/09	Ft. Worth	11
<b>Total for All Events</b>			<b>1,796</b>
CAC of Texarkana Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Capacity Building	4/30/09	Texarkana	Data not yet reported
Texas Judicial Summit	5/11-5/13/09	Fort Worth	Data not yet reported
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders-Intervention Training	Launched 5/4/09	Online Course	Data not yet available
Compliant Victims - An Uncomfortable Reality	7/28/09	Austin	Data not yet available
CACTX Better Outcomes Through MDT Facilitation Training	9/22-9/24/09	Austin	Data not yet available
Statewide Drug Endangered Children Conference	8/5/09	Grapevine	Data not yet available

<sup>8</sup> See Border Starr Kids Project, CAC of Hidalgo, p. 17.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Annual Training Conference	\$12,372
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Texas Foster Families Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, motivating, and supporting foster and adoptive parents.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held 35th annual training conference for foster families, CASA workers, ad litem attorneys, social workers, and others in the field of child protection - October 2-4, 2008.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>723 attendees received a total of 13,000 training hours or about 18 hours each - Below target.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders-Intervention Training	\$61,129
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Texas Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities is a state agency created to coordinate activity among the many state and private agencies that work to prevent developmental disabilities.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(2), B(2), and B(5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiated kick off meetings with Principal Investigator (PI) and Curriculum Developer.</li> <li>Conducted focus group at CASA of Travis County to survey test group and formulate online questionnaire.</li> <li>Marketed Survey Monkey questionnaire to CASA volunteers by CASA staff and TOPDD.</li> <li>Received approval as Social Work CEU Provider.</li> <li>Conducted needs assessment and identified learning objectives and assessment questions.</li> <li>Subject matter experts reviewed curriculum.</li> <li>Completed final storyboard.</li> <li>Conducted site visits to CASAs of Travis and Bell counties.</li> <li>Completed first draft of training workbook.</li> <li>Applied to become Early Intervention Specialist CEU provider.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data not yet available</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
MDT Capacity Building	\$7,474
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Northeast Texas Children's Advocacy Center is a local children's advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending caregivers in Camp, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Rains, Titus, Upshur, and Wood Counties.	

<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>
<b>Regional Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled regional training for April 30, 2009.</li> <li>Confirmed presenters and ordered materials.</li> <li>Sent invitations to area team members and agencies.</li> </ul> <b>MDT Capacity Building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set dates for MDT meetings.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Regional Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data not yet available.</li> </ul> <b>MDT Capacity Building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at MDT meetings has increased by 25% - Currently below target.</li> </ul>

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Strengthening CAC MDTs and Leadership	\$97,267
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. (CACTX) is the statewide membership association, representing all local children's advocacy centers (CACs) in Texas. CACTX provides training and technical assistance to local CACs to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and restore the lives of abused children.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1) and A(2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered 1 Advanced Forensic Interview Training.</li> <li>Delivered 2 Team Leadership Trainings.</li> <li>Delivered 2 MDT Orientation sessions.</li> <li>Delivered 1 Advanced MDT Training.</li> <li>Delivered 4 Executive Director Networking Forums.</li> <li>Delivered 1 Train the Trainer session to transition training responsibilities from contract trainer to CAC staff.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<b>Advanced Forensic Interview Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>64 participants trained – Exceeded target.</li> <li>93% of participants reported an increase in knowledge and understanding of the issues and challenges forensic interviewers face when interviewing repeat clients- Exceeded target.</li> <li>100% of participants reported the information was useful in their daily work – Exceeded target.</li> </ul>	

**Team Leadership Training**

- 66 participants trained – Exceeded target.
- 100% of participants reported an increase in knowledge at the completion of the training – Exceeded target.
- Participants reported the training opened up conversations among team members, facilitated focused discussions on hard topics, gave insight into problems as well as the understanding that other teams experience similar problems, and offered the opportunity to share and learn from other teams.

**MDT Trainings**

- 74 participants trained – Exceeded target.
- 94.5% of participants reported an increase in knowledge at the completion of the training – Exceeded target.
- Participants reported they learned/reaffirmed the importance of communication, especially between law enforcement and CPS, the strength behind joint investigations, the importance of the Forensic Interview and the role of the Forensic Interviewer, steps that can be taken to overcome challenges, and the importance of each discipline's perspective.

**Executive Director Networking Forums**

- 41 participants trained – Exceeded target.
- 100% of respondents reported an increased commitment to MDT model and increase in knowledge and understanding as it related to enhancing service delivery for child victims – Exceeded target.
- Participants reported learning new ideas, concepts, and approaches and felt a renewed sense of purpose in their mission. They also found the opportunity to network and discuss issues with others facing similar challenges invaluable.

**Train the Trainer**

- 9 staff participants trained – Exceeded target.
- 100% of participants reported an increase in knowledge and skills – Exceeded target.
- CAC staff indicated they felt like they had more tools to use to make trainings have more impact, knew how to more effectively work with co-trainers, knew how to draw answers/participation from attendees, and learned new things to do during their trainings.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Texas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children	\$99,999
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health, safety and productivity of citizens in the North Texas area by reducing the incidence and impact of alcohol and drug abuse.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-4), B(1, 3, and 5).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	

**Learning Sites**

- Conducted a series of meetings with DPD Narcotics Division and reached an agreement to implement a DEC pilot in Dallas County.
- Conducted DEC training for Dallas pilot project.
- Selected all five DEC learning sites: Dallas, Denton, Comal, Hunt, and Tarrant Counties.

**Training**

- Overhauled core awareness curriculum and created new step-by-step training on DEC alliance model.

**Expansion/Technical Assistance**

- Conducted two trainings in Greenville in February to aid in the establishment of Hunt County DEC.
- Facilitated DEC MOU in Comal County.
- Conducted train the trainer in El Paso.
- Hosted Jefferson County initial meeting and training.
- Established TADEC Local Leaders Forum for professionals from the various disciplines involved in Texas DEC efforts to connect, organize, troubleshoot and share resources.

**Data Collection**

- Met with the CPS Substance Abuse Program Specialist to pursue consistent data by integrating a DEC flag in CPS reporting system.

**Outcomes**

- All five learning sites on are track to submit monthly data by June 2009 - On track to meet target.
- Added 6 additional DEC alliances and are in contact with 15 additional counties - On track to exceed target.
- No data available yet on whether local protocols are being followed.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Texas Judicial Summit	\$57,125
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
TCU Institute of Child Development is an educational institution dedicated to researching, training, and providing services to meet the needs of families with at-risk children.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(2), B(2, 5, and 6).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed dates and venue.</li> <li>• Invited and confirmed speakers.</li> <li>• Finalized agenda.</li> <li>• Secured continuing education credits.</li> <li>• Designed and developed save the date card and registration.</li> <li>• Designed and created conference website.</li> <li>• Marketed the event.</li> <li>• Opened conference registration.</li> <li>• Made A/V arrangements.</li> <li>• Requested training handouts.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated professional videotaping.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data not yet available.</li> </ul>

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Accidental and Inflicted Mechanisms of Injury in Children: A CD ROM for investigative, legal, and law enforcement professionals	\$141,750
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio is an educational institution dedicated in part to serving the needs of the citizens of Texas by providing medical education and training to medical students and physicians and conducting biomedical and other health-related research.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(2), B(2 and 6).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructed a list of specific injuries and medical finding often encountered in alleged abuse cases.</li> <li>Identified 53 animation sequences.</li> <li>Purchased computer model of an infant skeleton for use in animation sequences.</li> <li>Completed eighteen animation sequences.</li> <li>Completed script and recording for first section of DVD, entitled "Fractures" and secured radiographic images of included findings.</li> <li>Constructed a series of eight "More Information" sections for the "Fractures" section, detailing high-level medical information and completed narration for these sections. Animations and power point type visuals will be used in these segments.</li> <li>Completed drafts of scripts for "Head Injuries," "Abdominal Injuries," and "Other Injuries."</li> <li>Project is on track for completion by September 2010.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data not yet available.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
6th Annual Training Conference: Representing Children in DFPS Cases: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Advocacy	\$3,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
CASA of Hidalgo County, Inc. is a local CASA program in Hidalgo County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered annual conference on multidisciplinary approach to advocacy.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge about multidisciplinary approaches to advocacy - Exceeded target.</li> </ul>	

- 80% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge about the availability of victim services in the area - Exceeded target.
- 280 child-protection professionals trained, a 20% increase from last year - Exceeded target.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
2009 MDT Training	\$3,140.50
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Henderson County HELP Center is a 501(c)(3) that houses the local CAC program in Henderson County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered annual MDT training for law enforcement, prosecution, CPS, CASA, day care directors, therapists, counselors, school personnel, and family advocate. Featured speaker was Detective Mike Johnson from the Plano Police Department.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38 child-protection professionals trained</li> <li>• 100% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge of the MDT process - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 100% of respondents reported an intention to participate on MDT - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• Participants' comments indicated an increase in knowledge about the importance of MDTs, their role in child abuse investigations, and best practices for working within an MDT.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Training: Techniques to Aid those Working with the Attachment Challenges of Children in the Foster Care System	\$986.39
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Gregg County Family Law Council is a division of the Gregg County Bar Association, the local bar association in Gregg County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2)	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held two, day-long seminars on Reactive Attachment Disorder for caseworkers, foster parents, CASAs, therapists, and attorneys, January 16-17, 2009.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 291 professionals trained.</li> <li>• 100% of respondents reported an increased ability to identify attachment challenged behaviors - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 99.4% of respondents reported an increased ability to identify specific techniques to apply when attachment challenged behaviors occur - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 99.4% of respondents reported an increased awareness of the relationship between fear, stress, and severe behaviors - Exceeded target.</li> </ul>	

- 99.4% of respondents reported an increased understanding of the root cause of challenging behaviors - Exceeded target.
- Overall seminar rated as 9.7 out of ten on Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Overall seminar rated as 9.63 out of ten on Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
2009 Team Retreat	\$3,114
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County is a local children's advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending caregivers in Denton County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held 2009 MDT Retreat for Denton County MDT members, March 27, 2009.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 child-protection professionals trained.</li> <li>• 98% of respondents reported an increase in their knowledge of the juvenile justice system - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 93% of respondents reported an increase in their knowledge of reasonable discipline vs. child abuse and the expectations of the District Attorney's office - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 93% of respondents reported an increase in their knowledge of preparing for court - Exceeded target.</li> <li>• 80% of respondents reported an increase in their knowledge of the tools and tactics defense attorneys use to find reasonable doubt in child abuse cases – Did not meet target.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Advanced Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Training and Assessment	\$5,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
Children's Advocacy Center of Van Zandt, Inc. is a local children's advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending caregivers in Van Zandt County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held Advanced MDT Team Training and Assessment, May 4, 2009. Curriculum included information on the components of children's advocacy centers and MDTs, the forensic interview process, case reviews and staffing, and agency relationships.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 child-protection professionals trained.</li> <li>• 95% of respondents reported an increased level of relevant knowledge and skills gained- Exceeded target.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
Training: Protecting Children, Saving Lives	\$5,000
<b>Subgrantee</b>	
The Center for Child Protection is a local children's advocacy center (CAC) serving child abuse victims and non offending caregivers in Travis County.	
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>	
Project supports recommendations A(1-2).	
<b>Activities this reporting period</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held three-day, training for child-protection professionals, April 8-10, 2009. The first day of the training focused on how to interview children who witness violent death. Days 2-3 were dedicated to how to effectively intervene with families who are affected by poverty.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>110 child-protection professionals trained.</li> <li>98.8% of respondents reported an increased understanding of how poverty affects a person's life experience - Exceeded target.</li> <li>98.8% of respondents reported an increased understanding of how poverty creates barriers to successful change - Exceeded target.</li> <li>80% of respondents reported an increased understanding of the multidisciplinary approach in cases involving children – Exceeded target.</li> <li>95.7% of respondents reported an increased understanding of a child's developmental and emotional needs after experiencing trauma – Exceeded target.</li> </ul>	

**Scholarships - \$79,506.36**

In addition to providing funds to organizations to develop and implement trainings, the Task Force also awarded scholarships for professionals to attend the following local, statewide, and national training events:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>		
Participant Support for Child Protection Professionals to Attend Training Events	\$79,506.36		
<b>Corresponding Children's Justice Act Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>			
Project supports recommendations A(2)			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Participants Supported</b>
2009 Crimes Against Children Conference	8/17-8/20/09	Dallas, TX	48
2009 National CASA Conference	4/25-4/28/09	Denver, CO	2
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) Child Forensic Interview Clinics	3/9-3/13/09 6/1-6/5/09	Virginia Beach, VA Seattle, WA	2
CACTX Team Leadership Training	1/14-1/16/09 3/31-4/2/09	Austin, TX Austin, TX	29
Center for Juvenile Justice Reform	4/23/09	Washington D.C.	1

Certificate Program for Individuals			
National Symposium on Child Abuse	3/23-3/26/09	Huntsville, AL	4
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Training Sessions on Child Abuse Investigations and Child Abuse Sexual Exploitation Investigations	6/8-6/12/09 7/20-7/24/09 9/10-9/14/09	Reno, NV Tulsa, OK Knoxville, TN	5
Texas Judicial Summit	5/11-5/13/09	Fort Worth, TX	1
<b>Total Number of Participants Supported</b>			<b>92</b>

# **Three-Year Assessment Report and Task Force Recommendations**

## **Review and Evaluation**

Pursuant to the federal program instructions, every three years the CJA Task Force must conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the State systems responsible for the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of the child abuse and neglect cases and make policy and training recommendations for improvements. To meet this requirement in 2009, the CJA Task Force participated in a full-day, facilitated brainstorming session and several follow up working group sessions.

The facilitated brainstorming session provided the Task Force with the opportunity to discuss current trends affecting the child-protective system, strengths and weaknesses within the system, and some promising practices for improvements. Following this discussion, Task Force members then divided into the following four working groups based on their interest and professional expertise: (1) Improving Investigations/Interventions, (2) Improving Conservatorship, (3) Improving Assessments and Access to Services, and (4) Improving Courts. Based on information from the brainstorming session, each working group identified 3-4 key areas on which to focus further research. After consolidating similar ideas, the following areas of interest were identified by the CJA Task Force for further discussion:

- Cross-jurisdictional issues, including international, interstate, and federal-state
- Multidisciplinary team support
- Communication and collaboration within and between disciplines involved in the child-protection system
- Children in the permanent managing conservatorship of the state without termination of parental rights
- CPS caseworker training, supervision, and retention
- Effective and consistent GAL and CASA involvement
- Inadequate foster care capacity
- Prevalence of families and children with mental and behavioral health issues in the child-protection system
- Prevalence of children with disabilities in the child-protection system
- Prevalence of families with substance abuse issues in the child-protection system
- Effective and consistent legal representation
- Engaging families
- Judicial inconsistency

These issues were then redistributed among the four working groups. Each working group met to discuss in depth its assigned issues and formulate recommendations for systems' improvements. The CJA Task Force invited additional child-protection stakeholders and experts to participate in the working group meetings.

All together, the working groups generated over 130 recommendations. These initial recommendations were further consolidated into 58 recommendations and placed into 17 broader categories. At its next meeting, the Task Force discussed the preliminary recommendations. Following the discussion, the Task Force further narrowed their list of recommendations to 23.

The top 23 recommendations were prioritized based on the extent to which each (1) focused on system improvements, (2) fulfilled the intent of the Children’s Justice Act grant, (3) addressed the identified gaps, and (4) built upon previous efforts of the Task Force. In the end, the Task Force approved and the Texas Center adopted 14 recommendations. Each recommendation was associated with one of four identified goals of the CJA program. The recommendations adopted also satisfy each of the required categories described in Section 107(e) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.<sup>9</sup>

## **CJA Task Force 2010-2012 Recommendations**

### **Goal 1 - To improve the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, the CJA Task Force recommends the following:**

- 1.1 Support the development and promotion of training for first responders.
- 1.2. Encourage the revision and/or development of protocols, policies, or best practices for first responders.
- 1.3 Ensure forensic interviewers are adequately supported and trained, including more opportunities for peer reviews.
- 1.4 Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the investigation and prosecution of cases of child sexual exploitation and trafficking.

### **Goal 2 - To improve the handling of cases of child abuse and neglect involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems, the CJA Task Force recommends the following:**

- 2.1 Encourage the revision of investigative protocols for dealing with children with disabilities.
- 2.2 Support the use of specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as single, consistent advocates for children with disabilities through the entirety of their case.
- 2.3 Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related concerns.

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix D for CJA Task Force 2010-2012 Recommendations by category.

**Goal 3 - To improve the coordination and collaboration between and within the various disciplines handling cases of child abuse and neglect, the CJA Task Force recommends the following:**

- 3.1 Provide multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) with adequate support, training, and networking opportunities, so they will stay well-engaged and coordinated.
- 3.2 Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving family substance abuse, and mental and behavioral health issues.
- 3.3 Support the creation and/or expansion of coordinator positions to help the child victim and the victim’s family access and complete services.
- 3.4 Support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention.
- 3.5 Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships.

**Goal 4 - To expedite successful case resolution, the CJA Task Force recommends the following:**

- 4.1 Support the used of specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC.
- 4.2 Support policies that retain CASAs and attorney ad litem after PMC is awarded.
- 4.3 Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving children in PMC.
- 4.4 Support strength-based, family-focused initiatives.
- 4.5 Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals designed to promote family-focused, culturally-competent practice.
- 4.6 Encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases.

**Implementation of Task Force Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1.1 - Support the development and promotion of training for first responders.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b> 5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center

7/10/09	Grant applications due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Further research issue, identify potential training providers, and partner with selected provider(s) to develop curriculum or modify existing curriculum	Task Force working group
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement and expand first responder training	Task Force/Grantee
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 1.2 - Encourage the revision and/or development of protocols, policies, or best practices for first responders.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant applications due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Examine existing protocols and best practices, assess the specific need for protocols, and explore ways to disseminate the information	Task Force working group
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Include protocol development as part of first responder training	Task Force/Grantee
Ongoing	Evaluate use of protocols and outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 1.3 - Ensure forensic interviewers are adequately supported and trained, including more opportunities for peer reviews.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Solicit grant application from CACTX for forensic interviewer trainings and peer reviews	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee (CACTX)
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Provide advanced forensic interviewer trainings for tenured interviews	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide forensic interviewer peer review sessions, including Spanish language session	Grantee (CACTX)

Ongoing	Evaluate outcomes of forensic interviewer training and peer review sessions	Texas Center/Grantee (CACTX)
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Provide advanced forensic interviewer trainings for tenured interviews	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide forensic interviewer peer review sessions, including Spanish language session	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Evaluate outcomes of forensic interviewer training and peer review sessions	Texas Center/Grantee (CACTX)

**Recommendation 1.4 – Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the investigation and prosecution of cases of child sexual exploitation and trafficking.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on child sexual exploitation and trafficking	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on child sexual exploitation and trafficking	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 2.1 - Encourage the revision of investigative protocols for dealing with children with disabilities.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center

7/10/09	Grant applications due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Examine existing protocols and best practices, assess the specific need for protocols, and explore ways to disseminate the information	Task Force working group
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Consider the inclusion of protocols in relevant training(s)	Task Force/Grantee
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
Ongoing	Evaluate use of protocols and outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 2.2 - Support the use of specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as single, consistent advocates for children with disabilities through the entirety of their case.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application(s) due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as child advocates	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Expand FASD training for CASA volunteers	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project(s) outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as child advocates	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Expand FASD training for CASA volunteers	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project(s) outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 2.3 – Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related concerns.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including children with disabilities	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Expand the FASD training for CASA volunteers	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related concerns	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including children with disabilities	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Expand the FASD training for CASA volunteers	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related concerns	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including children with disabilities	Grantee (Texas CASA)

**Recommendation 3.1 - Provide multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) with adequate support, training, and networking opportunities, so they will stay well-engaged and coordinated.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Solicit grant application from CACTX for a training and technical assistance program for local MDTs and CACs	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee (CACTX)
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Provide Team Facilitation Training and Networking Forum	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide Team Leadership Trainings	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide customized on-site team assessment and trainings	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide executive and program director networking forums	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Evaluate outcomes of trainings and technical assistance	Texas Center/Grantee (CACTX)
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Provide Team Facilitation Training and Networking Forum	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide Team Leadership Trainings	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide customized on-site team assessment and trainings	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Provide executive and program director networking forums	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Evaluate outcomes of trainings and technical assistance	Texas Center/Grantee (CACTX)

**Recommendation 3.2 - Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving family substance abuse, and mental and behavioral health issues.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including cases involving family substance abuse and mental and behavioral health issues	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Utilize Texas CASA's medical/mental health module to provide multidisciplinary training opportunities throughout the state.	Grantee (Texas CASA)

Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on handling cases involving family substance abuse, and mental and behavioral health issues	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including cases involving family substance abuse and mental and behavioral health issues	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Utilize Texas CASA's medical/mental health module to provide multidisciplinary training opportunities throughout the state.	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on handling cases involving family substance abuse, and mental and behavioral health issues	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center

**Recommendation 3.3 - Support the creation and/or expansion of coordinator positions to help the child victim and the victim's family access and complete services.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as child advocates	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Provide Family Advocate Training and Networking Forums	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as child advocates	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Provide Family Advocate Training and Networking Forums	Grantee (CACTX)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 3.4 - Support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Solicit grant application from the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) for CPS staff professional development program	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee (DFPS)
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Pilot DFPS Mid-Level Management Certificate Program (DMCP) for Child Protective Services	Grantee (DFPS)
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement and expand DMCP	Grantee (DFPS)
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee (DFPS)

**Recommendation 3.5 - Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
4/24/09	Develop criteria for awarding renewable partnership grants	Texas Center
6/24/09	Identify new categories for Task Force membership, including legislative staff and school representatives	Task Force
6/24/09	Pursue additional criminal prosecutors and law enforcement representation for Task Force membership	Task Force
7/10/09	Revise and approve criteria for awarding partnership grants	Texas Center/Task Force
7/24/09	Task Force member elections	Task Force
Ongoing	Continue to identify and explore avenues for developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships	Task Force
Ongoing	Participate in weekly collaboration meetings with staff from Texas Supreme Court's Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families (Commission) and other child-protection stakeholders	Texas Center/Task Force
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Continue to identify and explore avenues for developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships	Task Force
Ongoing	Participate in weekly collaboration meetings with staff from Texas Supreme Court's Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families (Commission) and other child-protection stakeholders	Texas Center/Task Force

**Recommendation 4.1 - Support the used of specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in the Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) of the state.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Support targeted volunteer recruitment project for children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Develop and expand CASA permanency pilots	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Support targeted volunteer recruitment project for children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Develop and expand CASA permanency pilots	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 4.2 - Support policies that retain CASAs and attorney ad litem after PMC is awarded.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Support targeted volunteer recruitment project for children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Develop and expand CASA permanency pilots	Grantee (Texas CASA)

Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which use specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Support targeted volunteer recruitment project for children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Develop and expand CASA permanency pilots	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 4.3 - Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals to improve the handling of cases involving children in PMC.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including cases involving children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Utilize Texas CASA's Achieving Permanency module to provide multidisciplinary training opportunities throughout the state	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on handling cases involving children in PMC	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including cases involving children in PMC	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Utilize Texas CASA's Achieving Permanency module to provide multidisciplinary training opportunities throughout the state	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) on	Grantee(s)

Ongoing	handling cases involving children in PMC Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 4.4 - Support strength-based, family-focused initiatives.**

Timeline	Activities	Responsibility
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Consider recommending to Texas Legislature for interim session review	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which support strength-based, family-focused initiatives	Grantee(s)
TBA	Sponsor Roundtable with judicial and child protection stakeholders to discuss issues and needs of fathers related to the development of DFPS practices that focus on obtaining timely permanency outcomes for children	DFPS/Task Force/Texas Center
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Implement model program(s) which support strength-based, family-focused initiatives	Grantee(s)

**Recommendation 4.5 - Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals designed to promote family-focused, culturally-competent practice.**

Timeline	Activities	Responsibility
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Post Request for Applications (RFA) to solicit possible training projects	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee(s)
7/24/09	Identify relevant CJA scholarship opportunities	Task Force
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including family-focused, culturally-competent practice	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide the Casey Family Program's Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) training to child-protection professionals	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) designed to promote family-focused, culturally-competent practice	Grantee(s)

Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Create special-topics newsletter for child-protection professionals that would focus on different aspects of advocating for and representing children, including family-focused, culturally-competent practice	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide the Casey Family Program's Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) training to child-protection professionals	Grantee (Texas CASA)
Ongoing	Provide local and statewide multidisciplinary training(s) designed to promote family-focused, culturally-competent practice	Grantee(s)
Ongoing	Award CJA scholarship funds to professionals to attend training	Texas Center
Ongoing	Evaluate training outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee

**Recommendation 4.6 - Encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases.**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Year 1</b>		
5/8/09	Solicit grant application from the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases	Texas Center
7/10/09	Grant application due	Grantee (OCA)
10/1/2009	Award CJA grant funds	Texas Center
Ongoing	Implement model court program(s) to encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases	Grantee (OCA)
<b>Years 2&amp;3</b>		
Ongoing	Expand model program	Grantee (OCA)
Ongoing	Evaluate project outcomes	Texas Center/Grantee (OCA)
Ongoing	Seek legislative appropriation for continued support of model program	Task Force/Grantee (OCA)

# **2009-2010 Application for Funding (10/1/2009-9/30/2010)**

## **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Training and Technical Assistance – \$200,000**

### **Objective(s)**

- Enhance the functioning and productivity of MDTs by providing designated team facilitators with training and networking forums.
- Cultivate leadership among core team disciplines by bringing together local CAC teams facing similar challenges for cross-training, peer learning, and networking.
- Strengthen developing and established MDTs facing challenges through targeted, customized, on-site training and technical assistance.
- Improve service coordination for child abuse victims and non-offending caregivers involved with children's advocacy centers (CACs) by providing family advocates with relevant training and networking forums.
- Further evolve the MDT model by promoting dialogue and peer support among executive directors of CACs.

### **Target Population(s)**

This project will target MDT members including, law enforcement officers, CPS workers, prosecutors, medical professionals, mental health providers, forensic interviewers, family advocates, and others involved with the investigation and prosecution of child maltreatment cases; and CAC executive and program directors. An estimated 260 MDT members and CAC executive and program directors will participate in the proposed training activities.

### **Approaches**

Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas will provide the following MDT trainings and networking forums:

- Team Facilitation Training (estimate 1 session) and Networking Forum for Team Coordinators (estimate 1 session);
- Team Leadership Trainings (estimate 2 sessions);
- Customized Multidisciplinary Team Trainings (estimate 3 sessions);
- Family Advocate Trainings (estimate 1 session) and Networking Forums (estimate 1 session); and
- Executive and Program Director Networking Forums (estimate 3 sessions).

### **Results Expected**

- Improved team function and efficacy by developing and enhancing the facilitation and leadership skills of CAC staff and MDT members who function as team facilitator.
- Improved communication and operation between individual members of the MDT and among leaders within the team member agencies.
- Increased relevant knowledge and skills among all MDT members.
- Increased participant knowledge and understanding as it relates to enhancing service delivery for child victims and their non-offending caregivers.
- Increased participant commitment to the CAC model.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project strengthens the functioning and leadership of MDTs across the state and the CACs within which they work, improving case coordination and relevant services for children and families.

#### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

This project supports Task Force recommendations 3.1 and 3.4.

### **Forensic Interviewer Training and Peer Reviews - \$50,000**

#### **Objective(s)**

- Improve forensic interviewing following allegations of child abuse by increasing the availability of peer reviews, including Spanish language peer reviews.
- Address emerging issues and new challenges faced by forensic interviewers by offering advanced, specialized trainings.

#### **Target Population**

This project will target forensic interviewers across the state of Texas. An estimated 150 forensic interviewers will participate in proposed trainings and peer review sessions.

#### **Approaches**

Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas will provide the following forensic interviewer trainings and peer review sessions:

- Spanish Peer Review Sessions (estimate 2 sessions);
- Regional Peer Review Sessions (estimate 18 sessions); and
- Advanced Training for Tenured Forensic Interviewers (estimate 1 session).

#### **Results Expected**

- Increased knowledge and relevant skills of new and tenured forensic interviewers, including interviewers conducting Spanish language forensic interviews.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project increases the knowledge and relevant skills of forensic interviewers and enhances the overall integrity and professionalism of the forensic interview, thus improving the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect and leading to better outcomes for children and families.

#### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

This project supports Task Force recommendation 1.3.

### **CASA Volunteer Development – \$250,000**

#### **Objectives**

- Enhance CASA volunteer recruitment, including targeted recruitment efforts for children in the permanent managing conservatorship (PMC) of the state through continued public outreach efforts.
- Advocate for the permanent placement of children in PMC through PMC pilot initiatives.

- Improve the quality of volunteer advocacy by offering specialized, multidisciplinary training opportunities.

### **Target Population**

CASA volunteer development activities will target the following populations:

- Members of the public over the age of 21 with a willingness to serve as a volunteer advocate for abused and neglected children, particularly children in PMC;
- The more than 14,000 children in PMC, nearly 4,000 of which are in PMC without the termination of parental rights; and
- The 68 local CASA programs and more than 5,000 volunteer advocates serving foster children throughout the state of Texas.

### **Approaches**

Texas CASA, Inc. will provide the following volunteer development activities:

#### *Volunteer Recruitment and Public Awareness Campaign*

- Develop and implement trainings for local CASA programs to increase community investment and participation and improve volunteer recruitment efforts; and
- Continue to expand public outreach activities utilizing various mediums to reach a broad audience of potential volunteers.

#### *PMC Pilot Initiatives*

- Identify areas with large numbers of children in PMC; and
- Develop and implement pilots tailored for specifically identified populations.

#### *Multidisciplinary Training Initiatives*

Texas CASA, Inc. will provide the following multidisciplinary training opportunities:

- Knowing Who You Are Cultural Competency Trainings;
- Medical and Mental Health Regional Trainings;
- Special Topics Educational Newsletter to include topics identified in Task Force recommendations; and
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Training.

### **Results Expected**

- Increased number of CASA volunteers.
- Increased number of children in PMC with CASA volunteers.
- Increased number of children in PMC who achieve permanency.
- Decreased number of children in PMC.
- Increased knowledge and relevant skills of CASA volunteers and other child-protection professionals.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project strives to provide every child in the child-protection system with a well-trained volunteer advocate. Providing more children with quality volunteer advocates will move

children more quickly through the system to permanency, thus improving outcomes for children and families.

### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

This project supports Task Force recommendations 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.5

### **Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Mid-Level Management Certificate Program (DMCP) for Child Protective Services (CPS) - \$250,000**

#### **Objectives**

- Provide mid-level managers with professional development that enables them to critically address persistent complex challenges requiring adaptive, distributive, and culturally proficient leadership.

#### **Target Population**

The proposed project will target approximately 154 program directors and administrators from four diverse regions.

#### **Approaches**

DMCP includes the following components:

- Mid-level management needs assessment to identify training gaps;
- Regional Leadership Institutes (4 institutes (2 urban, 2 rural)) to develop action plans for specific changes;
- Transfer of learning via web-based courses to create leadership networks among participants;
- Mid-Level Management Leadership Conference for all participants to discuss progress and challenges;
- Action plan implementation throughout the grant period with technical assistance;
- Evaluation of outcomes and processes; and
- Development of mid-level management onboarding tool to assist new directors and administrators in identifying skills most critical to leading in their new role.

#### **Results Expected**

As a result of this project, participants will be able to:

- Model and teach necessary elements of statutes, rules, policies, assessment, decision making, case planning, and case process to facilitate the best possible case outcomes.
- Understand the value of a developmental approach to management.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Recognize when staff's emotional responses are interfering with casework and empower staff to identify and examine issues.
- Know the value and components of proactive, structured management.
- Recognize secondary trauma in self and others and implement strategies to address it.
- Assess and improve team functioning.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project will prepare mid-level managers to be strong and effective leaders, thereby supporting professional practice, building systems of care across communities, welcoming new staff into the workforce, and implementing emerging and effective practices to improve services to children and families.

### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

The proposed project supports Task Force recommendation 3.4.

### **Model Child Protection Court Program – \$150,000**

#### **Objectives**

- Expand the use of specialized judges to hear child protection cases.

#### **Target Population**

This project will target abused and neglected children within the identified jurisdiction of the model court.

#### **Approaches**

The Office of Court Administration will perform the following activities:

- Identify area for new child protection court;
- Identify relevant performance measures for program evaluation;
- Hire associate judge or part-time visiting judge to exclusively hear child-protection cases;
- Hire necessary court support staff; and
- Convene regular child-protection docket.

#### **Results Expected**

- Greater compliance with statutory timeframes.
- Improved court tracking and documentation.
- Increased participation by parties.
- Improved information exchange.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project promotes promising judicial practices, increases judicial accountability through improved data collection, and improves collaboration and information exchange, thus leading to better outcomes for children.

### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

The proposed project contributes to Task Force recommendation 4.6.

### **Scholarships for Child-Protection Professionals - \$20,000**

#### **Objectives**

- Increase the knowledge of child-protection professionals by providing participant support for professionals to attend relevant trainings.

### **Target Population**

This project will target child-protection professionals, such as judges, attorneys, law enforcement officers, CPS workers, medical professionals, and mental health providers. An estimated 20 child-protection professionals representing various disciplines will receive participant support to attend relevant trainings.

### **Approaches**

The CJA Task Force and staff will perform the following activities:

- Identify national and statewide quality trainings consistent with CJA Task Force recommendations;
- Determine selection criteria for scholarship recipients;
- Post notice of available funds to website, [www.texascja.org](http://www.texascja.org);
- Select scholarship recipients; and
- Administer and monitor awards.

### **Results Expected**

- Increased knowledge and relevant skills of child-protection professionals attending identified trainings.

### **Reform of State Systems Handling Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The proposed project contributes to the reform of state systems handling cases of child abuse and neglect by providing quality training to professionals who work in the child-protection field. Increasing the knowledge and relevant skills of child-protection professionals enhances their overall performance, leading to better outcomes for children and families.

### **Task Force Recommendation(s)**

This project supports Task Force recommendations 1.1, 1.4, 2.3, 3.2, 4.3, and 4.5

### **Other Projects - \$79,142**

Other projects consistent with the Task Force recommendations will be identified through a competitive grant solicitation process. Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, the CJA staff posted the relevant funding notice to the CJA website, [www.texascja.org](http://www.texascja.org). The CJA Task Force Grant Proposal Review Committee will review applications and make funding recommendations at the July 24<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting. Funds will be awarded for the period beginning October 1, 2009.

## Budget Summary (10/1/2009-9/30/2010)

Anticipated FFY09 Award	\$ 1,253,642.00
Confirmed FFY08 Unexpended Balance as of (5/30/09)	\$ 67,500.00
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,321,142.00</b>

### Budgeted Expenses

Texas Center Administrative Expenses	\$ (295,000.00)
Task Force Maintenance	\$ (27,000.00)
MDT Training and Technical Assistance	\$ (200,000.00)
Forensic Interviewer Training and Peer Reviews	\$ (50,000.00)
CASA Volunteer Development	\$ (250,000.00)
Model Child Protection Court Program	\$ (150,000.00)
Mid-Level Certificate Management Program	\$ (250,000.00)
Scholarships for Child-Protection Professionals	\$ (20,000.00)
Other Projects	\$ (79,142.00)
	<b>\$ (1,321,142.00)</b>

Appendix A  
Task Force Member  
Biographical Information

## **Task Force Member Biographical Information**

### **THE HONORABLE LARRY THORNE, CJA TASK FORCE CHAIR**

Judge, 317<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, Beaumont

Larry Thorne has been the Presiding Judge for the 317<sup>th</sup> District Court in Jefferson County since 1999. Prior to his election to the bench, he spent two years as the Court Master for Mental Health cases, almost 20 years in private practice handling both family and criminal law cases, and three years at the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office. Judge Thorne currently serves on the Juvenile Justice Committee for the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas; Jefferson County Court Improvement Project Task Force; and the Jefferson County CPS Mediation Project Task Force. He is currently Vice-Chairman on the Juvenile Board for Jefferson County; Vice-Chairman of the State Advisory Board for the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, and serves on the Pro Bono Board for the Jefferson County Bar Association. Additionally, Judge Thorne has served on the State Council of Child Welfare Boards; State Advisory Board for Child Welfare; Regional Child Welfare Board; Beaumont Advisory Commission for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (1999-2001); and East Texas Legal Services Board of Directors. He has also served as Chairman of the Jefferson County Child Welfare Board (1988-1998); and Chairman of the Jefferson County Juvenile Board (1998-2000). He is a graduate of the University of Texas and the Bates College of Law where he earned his J.D. in 1973.

### **VALERIE MILHOLLAND, CJA TASK FORCE VICE CHAIR**

Assistant County Attorney, Division Chief, Children's Protection Division, Harris County Attorney's Office, Houston

Valerie Milholland has been the Division Chief of the Children's Protection Division at the Harris County Attorney's Office, representing the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in child-protection cases since June 2006. Before taking her current position, she served as Division Chief of the Compliance and Guardianship Divisions for four years. After receiving her J.D. from South Texas College of Law, she spent a year as a briefing attorney for the Judge Marvin Teague of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas and the Houston Bar Association. Ms. Milholland is a graduate of Baylor University.

**ROY BLOCK**

Executive Director, Texas Foster Family Association, San Antonio

Mr. Block is currently the Executive Director of Texas Foster Family Association. He and his wife of 43 years Judi fostered 48 children over 17 years. In addition to their two biological children, they have adopted three children and have three grandchildren. Mr. Block has previously served as president of the Bexar County Foster Parents Association, on the board of the National Foster Parents Association, as well as several board positions on Texas Foster Parents Association. In addition to his duties with TFFA, he is also employed with a private child-placing agency. Roy and Judi are both advocates for children and can frequently be seen in Austin and other places, at workshops or meeting with those who can make a difference to improve the lives of the children of Texas.

**LT. COZETTE BUSTAMANTE**

Director, Crime Scene Unit, San Antonio Police Department, San Antonio

Lt. Cozette Bustamante has been with the San Antonio Police Department for more than 25 years. Before taking her current position as the Director of the Crime Scene Unit in March 2008, Lt. Bustamante served as the Director of the Sex Crimes Unit from August 1996 through March 2008. Prior to that, she investigated Sex Crimes cases for almost five years as a detective. She has also investigated Internal Affairs cases, including sexual harassment and discrimination cases from December 1990 through July 2006. Lt. Bustamante served on the Board of Directors for the San Antonio Rape Crisis Center and served in the capacity of Vice President for the Board for over 5 years. She has been a past recipient of the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault Justice Award and the YWCA of San Antonio Mentors and Allies Award.

**CATHY CRABTREE**

Executive Director, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc., Austin

Cathy Crabtree is the Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. (CACTX) – the statewide membership association representing the 63 local children's advocacy centers (CACs) throughout Texas. She has been with CACTX since 1999 and prior to that she was the founding director of a local CAC in Graham, TX. Crabtree has trained throughout the state and the nation on issues related to the establishment and development of community-based CACs and CAC State Chapters and is a member of the National Children's Alliance and the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. She is a graduate of West Virginia University.

**DE SHAUN EALOMS**

Parent Program Specialist, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin

De Shaun Ealoms is currently the Parent Program Specialist for Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Ms. Ealoms participates in program planning, development in implementation of parent support activities across the state. She facilitates the statewide Parent Collaboration Group and provides technical assistance to the CPS regions across Texas with their local parent information and support groups for parents involved with the CPS system. Ms. Ealoms gathers and provides vital information on parent involvement and helps identify ways to strengthen CPS policy and programs to improve services to parents and their children served through the CPS system. Prior to coming to CPS, Ms. Ealoms served as a Parent Liaison with The Children's Partnership in Austin, Texas. Ms. Ealoms is also a parent who has utilized CPS services to access needed supports and services for her son who has autism. Ms. Ealoms is a member of Autism Society of America, and has served on the Austin Independent School District Special Education Advisory Committee and Mental Health Mental Retardation Center Advisory Committee. Ms. Ealoms received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Huston-Tillotson College and a Masters Degree in Special Education from Texas State University.

**JON EVANS**

Attorney at Law, Lusk and Evans, Austin

Jon Evans is a criminal defense attorney practicing in Travis County, as well as the surrounding Central Texas Counties. He has been representing both juveniles and adults facing misdemeanor and felony criminal charges in State and Federal Courts since 1993. Mr. Evans has extensive criminal trial experience in Austin, and in jurisdictions throughout Texas. Mr. Evans is board certified in criminal law. He is a graduate of the University of Texas and received his J.D. from Texas Tech University School of Law, where he served on the Board of Barristers.

**JOE GAGEN**

Chief Executive Officer, Texas CASA, Inc., Austin

Joe Gagen is the Chief Executive Officer of Texas CASA, Inc. Before coming to Texas CASA, he was appointed chair of the Texas Industrial Accident Board by then Governor, Mark White, and was General Council and Staff Director for the Texas Senate State Affairs Committee. He is currently a member of the State Bar of Texas and has been admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Gagen is an honors graduate from the University of Texas School of Law, where he taught Quizmaster.

**DR. ROLF HABERSANG**

Department of Pediatrics, Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Amarillo

Dr. Habersang is a pediatrician in Amarillo with an extensive background handling child abuse and neglect cases. He serves on the local child fatality review team. His expertise in this area is nationally recognized.

**DENISE HYDE**

Attorney at Law, Law Office of Denise Hyde, Austin

Denise Hyde is a family law attorney at the Law Office of Denise Hyde. She is a member of the Family Law Sections of both the Austin Bar Association and the State Bar of Texas, and a founding member of the Austin Bar Foundation and the Court Appointed Family Attorneys of Travis County. She has presented numerous adoption trainings throughout the state and has received many awards for outstanding service to children and families, including the Travis County Women Lawyer's Association's Pro Bono Award and the Award of Appreciation in Recognition of Distinguished and Dedicated Service to Children and Families by the State Bar of Texas. She was recognized as a CASA Champion for Children in 2004. Ms. Hyde is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas School of Law.

**JOYCE M. JAMES**

Deputy Commissioner, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services,  
Austin

Before becoming Deputy Commissioner in January 2009, Joyce James had served as Assistant Commissioner of Child Protective Services since 2004. She is a member of the Texas Permanent Judicial Commission on Children, Youth, and Families. Ms. James began her professional career as a CPS caseworker in 1980 and has devoted the last 28 years to advocating for children and families. Under her leadership, more than 7,500 CPS staff across 254 Texas counties provides services to abused and neglected children and their families. Ms. James is considered a national expert on issues related to disproportionality of African American children and families in the CPS system. She has received numerous awards and honors for her professional achievements and community service.

**MARGARET LALK**

Attorney at Law, Austin

Margaret Lalk began her work at the Brazos County District Attorney's Office in 1982 and took over the Child Protective Services caseload in 2000. During this time, she was an active participant on the local Children's Advocacy Center's multidisciplinary team and also served as a steering committee member for the center. She received numerous awards for her dedication to children and families, including the Bob Wiatt Lifetime Achievement Award and CASA's Champion for Children award. Ms. Lalk is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and received her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law. She currently resides in Austin.

**DR. JAMES L. LUKEFAHR**

Professor of Pediatrics, University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio

Dr. James Lukefahr joined the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio's Child Abuse Division in June 2007. He is Medical Director of the Christus Santa Rosa Children's Hospital Center for Miracles, which is a multidisciplinary facility for evaluating physically abused and neglected children. From 1996 until 2007, he was a professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Department of Pediatrics in Galveston and served as Medical Director of UTMB's ABC Center for the Evaluation of Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect. Dr. Lukefahr has written numerous scholarly articles on child abuse and neglect and serves as the co-chair of the Texas Pediatric Society Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. He was appointed by Governor George W. Bush to serve on the Children's Trust Fund of Texas Council from 1999 until 2001. Dr. Lukefahr was a founding board member of the Children's Advocacy Center of Galveston County, where he spent ten years working the medical aspect of child abuse cases with the multidisciplinary team.

Dr. Lukefahr formerly had a private pediatric practice in the Pasadena area before joining the faculty of the Driscoll Children's Hospital pediatric residency program in Corpus Christi, Texas in 1993. While in Corpus Christi, he served as Medical Director to both the Children's Hospital's general outpatient clinic and of its WIC program and was instrumental in establishing a Child Protection Program, Health Families Program and a large behavioral problems clinic. Dr. Lukefahr completed his residency in Pediatrics at UT Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas and became Board Certified in Pediatrics in 1984. He received his B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and his M.D. from UT Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

**DAN POWERS**

Senior Director of Clinical and Administrative Services, Collin County Children's Advocacy Center, Plano

Dan Powers, LCSW, LSOTP currently serves as Senior Director of Clinical and Administrative Services for Collin County Children's Advocacy Center in Plano, Texas. He supervises a staff of 15 therapists and clinical interns providing no cost services to victims of abuse and family violence as well as their non-offending family members. As Senior Director he is responsible for clinical operations and program development as well as directing the Advocacy Center's clinical internship and training program. Dan has over 20 years of experience working within the field of child maltreatment and family violence. In addition, he provides expert court testimony and consultation related to child maltreatment, sex offenders and family violence. In 2008 he was appointed by Governor Rick Perry to serve on the Texas Council on Sex Offender Treatment. Dan has presented workshops locally as well as on a state and national level in the area of child abuse.

**FAIRY DAVENPORT RUTLAND**

Director, Appeals Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Austin

Fairy Davenport Rutland is the Vice Chair of the State Bar Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect and a member of the Permanent Judicial Commission on Children, Youth, and Families. She has spent her entire 30-plus-years legal career working for the cause of child protection and advocacy. The State Bar Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect in 2007 renamed its annual Outstanding Service to Children and Families Award in her honor. Ms. Rutland was also a longtime member of the Supreme Court Task Force on Foster care, formed in 1994.

**GERRY WILLIAMS**

General Counsel, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin

Gerry Williams has been an attorney for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) since June of 1988. Before being appointed to General Counsel in 2004, he had been an attorney in all three program areas (Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and Child Care Licensing), in both the San Antonio and Dallas regions, supervised DFPS attorneys responsible for developing rules and policy for the three different program areas, and supervised DFPS attorneys trying due process hearings when abuse and neglect was found. Prior to his time with the agency, Mr. Williams worked as Assistant Ellis County District Attorney in Waxahachie, Texas handling misdemeanor cases, juvenile cases, and child protective services cases. He is a graduate of Baylor University and received his J.D. from Baylor School of Law.

Appendix B  
Task Force Membership By  
Statutorily Required Disciplines

## Task Force Membership Composition by Statutorily Required Disciplines

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Representative(s)</b>
<b>Law Enforcement Community</b>	Lt. Cozette Bustamante
<b>Criminal Court Judge(s)</b>	Vacancy to be filled July 2009
<b>Civil Court Judge(s)</b>	Hon. Larry Thorne
<b>Prosecuting Attorney(s)</b>	Valerie Milholland
<b>Defense Attorney(s)</b>	Jon Evans
<b>Child Advocate(s) (Attorney(s) for Children)</b>	Denise Hyde Fairy Rutland Margaret Lalk
<b>Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative(s)</b>	Joe Gagen
<b>Health Professional(s)</b>	Dr. James Lukefahr
<b>Mental Health Professional(s)</b>	Dan Powers
<b>Child Protective Service Agencies</b>	Joyce James Gerry Williams
<b>Individual(s) experienced in working with children with disabilities</b>	Dr. Rolf Habersang
<b>Parent Group Representatives</b>	Roy Block De Shaun Ealoms
<b>Other(s)</b>	Cathy Crabtree

Appendix C  
CJA Task Force 2007-2009  
Recommendations

## **2007 – 2009 Children’s Justice Act Project Task Force Recommendations** **Approved August 4, 2007**

Grant funds should be used to implement state Task Force recommendations in the following three categories:

- A. Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; cases involving children with disabilities; 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 which reduce the additional trauma to the child victim and the victim’s family and which also ensures procedural fairness to the accused.

### **Recommendations**

1. Promote cross-discipline collaboration in the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases.
  2. Elevate expertise among child abuse and neglect professionals and volunteers.
  3. Recruit, support, and sustain community services and volunteers to assist children and their families—special consideration will be given to kinship care, CASA volunteers, capacity building, and media representation.
  4. Support evaluative and assessment efforts pertinent to the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases.
- B. Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques which 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.

### **Recommendations**

1. Promote cross-discipline collaboration in experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques.
  2. Elevate expertise among child abuse and neglect professionals and volunteers.
  3. Recruit, support, and sustain community services and volunteers to assist children and their families—special consideration will be given to kinship care, CASA volunteers, capacity building, and media representation.
  4. Promote and provide technical assistance to set up a model court system in the state of Texas.
  5. Support initiatives that demonstrate potential to be replicated in other communities.
  6. Promote the use of technology to maximize resources across disciplines statewide.
- C. Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, particularly sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

**Recommendations**

1. Support evaluative and assessment efforts pertinent to reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, procedures and protocols.
2. Educate Task Force about legislative issues.
  - Explore what's out there
  - Clarify scope of authority
  - Staff will research lobbying

Appendix D  
CJA Task Force 2010-2012  
Recommendations

## **2010 – 2012 Children’s Justice Act Project Task Force Recommendations** **Approved April, 24 2009**

Grant funds should be used to implement state Task Force recommendations in the following three categories:

- A. Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; cases involving children with disabilities; 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 which reduce the additional trauma to the child victim and the victim’s family and which also ensures procedural fairness to the accused.

### **Recommendations**

1. Provide MDTs with adequate support, training, and networking opportunities, so they will stay well-engaged and coordinated.
  2. Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals on one or more of the following topics: Disabilities, Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC), Substance Abuse, Cultural Competency, Engaging Families and Youth, Mental and Behavioral Health, Sexual Exploitation, and Child Trafficking.
  3. Support the development and promotion of training for first responders.
  4. Ensure forensic interviewers are adequately supported and trained, including opportunities for more peer reviews.
  5. Support strength-based, family-focused initiatives.
  6. Support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention.
  7. Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships.
- B. Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques which 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.

### **Recommendations**

1. Support the use of specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as single, consistent advocates for children with disabilities through the entirety of their case.
2. Support the used of specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC.
3. Support the creation and/or expansion of coordinator positions to help the child victim and the victim’s family access and complete services.
4. Encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases.

- C. Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, particularly sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

**Recommendations**

1. Encourage the revision of investigative protocols for dealing with children with disabilities.
2. Encourage the revision and/or development of protocols, policies, or best practices for first responders and schools.
3. Support policies that retain CASAs and AAL after Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) has been awarded.