

SC Children’s Justice Act Task Force
RECOMMENDATIONS
2018-2021

Following a 2018 assessment of the state’s systems responding to abused and neglected children, the CJA Task Force has identified target areas for improvement in three recommendation categories. The Task Force will collaborate with partnering agencies in an effort to implement these recommendations over a three-year period.

Category A. Recommendations for investigative, administrative and judicial improvements, including training:

- 1.A** Provide training to Multi-disciplinary Teams (MDT) on assessing **children with limited communication skills** and identify qualified resource professionals available for consultation.

- 2.A** Incorporate **Best Legal Practices** (BLP) into ongoing trainings for GAL, OID & DSS attorneys.

- 3.A** Provide training with DSS & GAL attorneys on recognizing signs of **stress on children who must testify** and prioritizing the scheduling of those cases accordingly.

Category B. Recommendations for experimental, demonstration and model programs:

- 4.B** Develop an experimental model of a **“Level 2 MDT”** to provide intervention and support up to court for high risk victims for recantation.

- 5.B** Continue to support the **SC Network of Children’s Advocacy Centers** including organizational capacity and infrastructural resources.

- 6.B** Continue to support the operation of the **Children’s Law Center** which is a training and information resource center for professionals involved in child maltreatment proceedings. Operations include implementing the training recommendations in collaboration with the Task Force, and for providing research and logistical support to the Task Force.

- 7.B** Coordinate and provide yearly intensive **training for SC Coroners** on child death investigations.

Category C: Recommendations for reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, procedures, or protocols:

- 8.C** Conduct a comprehensive review of **safety plan protocol** and implementation and support legislation and policy revision to address requirements and limitations for the duration of those plans.
- 9.C** Promote the use of **front-end assessments** to include trauma-informed screenings at CACs and group homes.
- 10.C** Improve **coordination with schools** following a report by school staff by clarifying confidentiality requirements and ensuring timely sharing of safety plans.
- 11.C** Establish a **statewide collaborative protocol** for the response to child abuse and neglect cases utilizing the CACs and the multi-disciplinary team approach.
- 12.C** Broaden **collaboration between schools and the CACs** both at the MDT level and in the follow up from a mandated report.
- 13.C** Review and reform the **CAC statute 63-11-310** to support the collaborative response to child abuse and neglect.
- 14.C** Provide support for any **child abuse legislation** that the Task Force deems will improve the state's response to abused and neglected children including NAS babies.