

CATCH UP WITH CAM

Winter 2024

www.ChildrensAllianceMT.org



Our Growth & Success is due to your growth and success

"It is an honor to support the work you do!"

As 2023 comes to a close, I've been reflecting on a busy year..
What did 2023 Bring:

- **Reaccredited with the National Children's Alliance**
- **Expanded Staff – Dani Peterson, Training Coordinator; Jacole Douglas, Rural Telemental Health Program Coordinator; Joy Lucero, Project Coordinator.**
- **Expanded our Rural Telemental Health Program – added and trained 8 new therapists**
- **18 Kids referred to Rural Telemental Health Program**
- **Renewed an additional 2-year VOCA grant to increase capacity of chapter staff and services**
- **Co-sponsored 3 statewide trainings–trained over 770 people**
- **Expanded OMS to 3 communities**
- **Inherited the Children's Justice Act Grant**
- **Established Montana Children's Justice Act Task Force**
- **Embarked on Gap Analysis Project – expand MDTs & CAC**

--And more! It has been an exciting year with a ton of expansion which means more training and resources for you, the professionals we support.

As we move towards 2024, I extend my sincerest thanks to Kipp Tkachyk for his leadership and service as he steps down as chair of the Board of Directors of the Children's Alliance of Montana. We look forward to Christina Powell taking up the reigns in 2024.

And I'd like to thank all of you for working to protect and support Montana's children and for your dedication to building your professional knowledge and expertise through CAM's trainings.

Here's to plowing right on into 2024 with excitement for kids. Thank you for all you do. It is our privilege and honor here at the Children's Alliance of Montana to support you in the hard work you do to protect Montana kids every day.

***Cheers, Salute, our Hats are off to you!!
Brenda George, Executive Director***

The Power of the Love and Comfort of A Facility Dog

In Loving Memory of "Calhoun"



As many of you know I lost Calhoun last year. Calhoun was a Facility dog from Canine Companions for Independence. Calhoun was present for over 300 Forensic Interviews, he also provided support to child victims while they testified in court.

Calhoun was present at many MCFIT trainings and usually provided comfort to the nervous interviewer. Calhoun provided comfort to so many children and families over the 10 years he was a working dog. He was one of a kind and will be missed. The power of dogs in these cases is remarkable and I would like to encourage all centers to add a Facility dog to their team.

For information on the program you can reach out to me.

Joy Lucero, Project Coordinator



Joy Lucero, Project Coordinator
jlucero@childrensalliancemt.org



Meet Facility Dogs Wicker & Twyla

Meet Facility Dogs Wicker & Twyla

Wicker is a 8 year old male Lab/Golden cross who was trained and provided by Canine Companions for Independence. His handler is Pattie Urie. They are based out of Bozeman. Wicker provides support to children before and after a forensic interview and also provides support in court.

Twyla is a 10 year old female Lab/Golden cross facility dog, who was trained and donated to Emma's House by Canine Companions for Independence. Twyla's handler is Val Widmer, the director of Emma's House. Twyla has been working with children in Forensic Interviews since May, 2016. Twyla also works with kids in mental health counseling, and is approved to be in the witness box when a child testifies. She has been to court numerous times. Twyla is a beloved member of her community and looks forward to retirement next year and training the next facility dog for Emma's House.



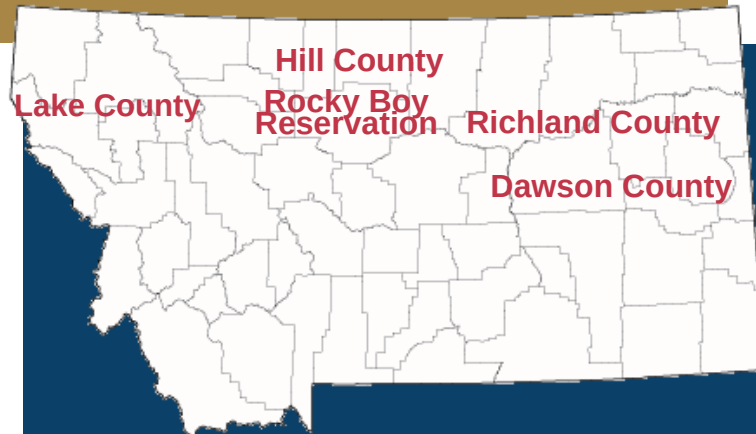
Gap Analysis – New Partnerships Formed

The Gap Analysis Project is an initiative started in the Fall of 2023 with the ultimate goal of expanding Multidisciplinary Teams and Child Advocacy Centers (MDT's and CAC's) across Montana.

We are doing a lot of things along the way.

- Comprehensive Assessment of each of the 56 counties - who has a team/who is interested in developing a team and what resources do you need to increase your response to kids?
- Developing 2-day MDT Training
- Host 2 to 3 MDT Trainings for Developing Team
- Provide teams with Resources - MDT Orientation Manual, white papers on interviewing children with disabilities etc.
- Provide communities with foundational and advanced forensic interview training
- Provide Forensic Interview Equipment and Teleforensic Interview Equipment

We have been reaching out to some of the more rural counties to assess their needs and interest. We have had overwhelming response with the counties showing great interest. We will continue reaching out and meeting with counties that are interested in the Spring. If your county is interested in developing a MDT please feel free to reach out to Joy Lucero. jlucero@childrensalliancemt.org



Lake County

Lake County MDT Leaders have been meeting for a year to develop an MDT and a CAC in Polson. They have acquired space at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center, for a forensic interview room, an MDT observation room as well as a waiting room for the family. They have the ability to do medical exams right across from the forensic interview room. This will lessen the stress on families as they won't have to travel to Missoula. They are having monthly meetings and will begin staffing cases in 2024. Thank you Lake County for your commitment to improving your response to child abuse cases. Thank you St. Joseph Medical Center for the generous donation of space.

Questions? Contact CAM at
PO Box 666
Billings, MT 59103
director@childrensalliancemt.org
406.672.2136

Richland County

Richland County multidisciplinary leaders came together in November and committed to develop a local MDT to strengthen their response to kids. On December 13, 2023, Richland County held their first MDT meeting. Great teamwork between CPS, Law Enforcement, and the County Attorney.



Rocky Boy Clinic

Leaders at the Rocky Boy Clinic and the multidisciplinary team came together in 2023 committed to develop a CAC within the Clinic. They wanted to develop a local, child friendly environment where children can be interviewed by trained forensic interviewers. The Children's Alliance of Montana was happy to provide the FI Equipment thanks to the Children's Justice Act Grant. It is critical to have a local response to kids and families as well as professionals responding to these crimes. Great job Rocky Boy Clinic and the Rocky Boy MDT.



Come Join Us!

Bozeman, Montana
Best Western Plus Grant Tree II

9th Annual MONTANA CHILDREN'S JUSTICE CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 27-29, 2024

NEW FORMAT
TUESDAY - FEB. 27TH - 1:00 - 5:00 PM - AFTERNOON
WEDNESDAY - FEB. 28TH - 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM - ALL DAY
THURSDAY - FEB. 29TH - 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM - MORNING

REGISTRATION OPEN
- REGISTER NOW -

LODGING SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE
You must register to access the lodging scholarship application

CONFERENCE TOPICS:

- Forensic Interviewing:
 - Exploring Alternative Hypothesis
 - Aspects of the Cognitive Interview
 - Caregiver Interview and It's Value
- Research & Practice Updates
- Be the Difference- What You Do Matters
- Challenges of Adversity and Trauma- Increase problem-solving, emotional and physical health, as well as resiliency
- Digital Crimes- Update on Technology Trends and Dangers for Youth
- Documenting Physical Abuse Injuries

VIEW AGENDA
-CLICK HERE-

COLEEN MAGERA
CHILDREN'S CHAMPION AWARD
Coleen Magera was a leader and champion for children. To honor her legacy, we will recognize the work of an individual or multidisciplinary team at this year's Children's Justice Conference with the Coleen Magera Children's Champion Award.
NOMINATE A TEAM MEMBER BY JAN. 17TH
CLICK HERE FOR NOMINATION FORM

2024 PRESENTER LINE UP:

- Gaelin Elmore**
From foster care, abuse, and homelessness, Gaelin had an adverse childhood that led him to the NFL and to stages across the country, aiming to inspire, encourage, and equip others to think differently about their work and its long-term impact on others.
- CRIMSON BAROCCA, LCSW-C**
Manager of Forensic Interview Research & Education at Center for Hope Forensic Services (formerly Baltimore Child Abuse Center). She has been at Center for Hope for the last 14 years; however, she began her career 20 years ago at child protective services in Baltimore as a forensic interviewer, investigator, and supervisor.
- NICOLE E. LYTLE, PH.D.**
Associate professor of social work and child advocacy at Montclair State University. She received her Ph.D. in experimental psychology from the University of Toledo.
- KATHRYN WELLS, MD, FAAP**
Executive Director, Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics, University of Colorado School of Medicine.
- BRIAN CASSIDY, ICAC COMMANDER**
and Agent, Crime Information Bureau of the Division of Criminal Investigations, Certified Forensic Computer Examiner (CFCE), GIAC Certified Computer Forensic Examiner (GCFE)
- PAULA SAMMS, LCPC**
Director, Lewis and Clark County Child Advocacy Center, a Program of AWARE

THIS TRAINING EVENT IS SPONSORED BY THE CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE OF MONTANA AND THE MCASRT PROGRAM OF THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/SPECIAL SERVICES BUREAU.

CONTACT DARRI BEYERSON TRAINING@CHILDJUSTICE.MT.GOV



Hill County

The Hill County Child Advocacy Center has a new home at the Hill County Health Department. They are under new management and coordination through the Hill County Attorney's Office.

The MDT is committed to providing the best services to kids and families. These changes are the first step to improving services and collaboration. CAM will be installing new forensic interview equipment in early 2024. Congratulations Hill County!



Brenda George, Executive Director
Danielle Peterson, Training Coordinator
Jacole Douglas, Rural Telemental Health Program Coordinator
Joy Lucero, Project Coordinator

Now Wrapping up its second year of accepting referrals, the **Montana Rural Telemental Health Program (MT RTMHP)** has received **55 referrals** for children in need of trauma-informed therapy to-date.

Through its **network of 18 trauma-trained therapists**, the MT RTMHP provides trauma-informed therapy via telemental health to any child across Montana who faces barriers to accessing in-person therapy. 2023 was a busy year for the MT RTMHP. In addition to connecting children and therapists, a few highlights for the MT RTMHP include:

- training a new cohort of therapists;
- adding a Care Coordinator, Courtney Nucito, who is the coordinator for the Child Evaluation Center at the Southwest Montana Community Health Center, to liaise with caregivers between the time a referral is received and a therapist is identified;
- presenting about the program at state and national conferences;
- revising our referral process, iPad loaner process, and therapist and referrer handbooks;
- continuing to learn and continuously adjust programming to better meet the needs of children and therapists who serve them.

If you're interested in learning more, please visit <https://childrensalliancemt.org/montana-rural-telemental-health-program/> or email Jacole Douglas at jacole@childrensalliancemt.org

Resources

Contact us for electronic copies:
director@childrensalliancemt.org

2023 National Standards of Accreditation for Children's Advocacy Centers

Mental Health Clinician Self-Assessment

Name of clinician: _____

Mental Health Standard

ESSENTIAL COMPONENT A

Educational/training requirement must meet ONE of the following:

Education/training completed	Yes	Complete
Master's degree in counseling/psychology in a related mental health field	<input type="checkbox"/>	Select
Master's degree in a related mental health field and working toward licensure supervised by a licensed mental health professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Select
Student status in an accredited mental health-related graduate program, when supervised by a licensed/qualified mental health professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Select

Both the student status and supervising licensed mental health professional must meet the indicated 40-hour training requirements. Students who are currently enrolled in a training to achieve an evidence-based treatment (EBT) may provide services to children as a part of their EBT training.

Foundational training requirement

Clinician has completed 40 hours in one or more of the following trauma-focused, evidence-based treatment trainings:

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) must demonstrate to mental health providers it has completed 40 contact hours in training and consultation calls to deliver an evidence-supported mental health treatment to children who have experienced trauma from abuse. (CAC approved treatments include PC-CPE, PC-AF-CPE, CPTI, EMDR, CPE PPS-CBT). Training programs that include fewer than 40 hours (including consultation calls) may be supplemented with consultation or evidence-based assessment.

Does the clinician have foundational training in one or more of these evidence-supported mental health treatments? Select

Do the training, consultation and supervision hours combined equal 40 hours? Select

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

OJJDP JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN
Working for Youth Justice and Safety

September 2023
Robert J. Loombe, Administrator

From the Administrator

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is pleased to announce the publication of the September 2023 issue of the OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin. This issue features a special section on child forensic interviewing, which includes a collection of articles, a commentary, and a Q&A session. The OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin is a free, peer-reviewed journal that provides information on the latest research, practice, and policy in the field of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.

Child Forensic Interviewing: Best Practices

Chis Swain, Linda Graham Smith, Julia Danaher, Jennifer Anderson, Julia Keenan, Amy Bassett, Heather Street, and Veda Nguyen Esq.

Highlights

This bulletin consolidates the current knowledge of professionals from several major forensic interview training programs on best practices for interviewing children in cases of alleged abuse. The authors discuss the purpose of the child forensic interview, provide historical context, review overall considerations, and address each stage of the interview in more detail. Among the topics that the authors discuss are the following:

- No two children will follow the same way or path to become comfortable with the process and the interviewer.
- Encouraging children to give detailed responses early in the interview enhances their responses later on.
- Forensic interviewers should use open-ended questions and should allow for silence or hesitation without moving to more focused prompts to quickly. Although such questions may encourage greater detail, they may also elicit potentially erroneous responses if the child feels compelled to reach beyond his or her stored memory.

OJJDP
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
ojjdp.gov

ATSA

Children with SEXUAL BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS
2ND EDITION

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The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
APSAAC
APSAAC ALERT
Vol. 13, No. 2

Dealing With Parental Alienation Allegations in Family Court

Jean Mancoske, Ph.D., and John Myers, J.D.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Parental alienation accusations can transform custody conflicts into child abuse allegations.
- The weaponization of the parental alienation concept in family court has a consequent chilling effect on abuse reports.
- Parental alienation is not an accepted psychological diagnosis.
- Knowledge of the history of the parental alienation concept and lack of adequate empirical research or established measurement protocols can provide a foundation to challenge parental alienation claims in the courtroom.

Professionals in child protection have historically had limited involvement with family court child custody matters. Similarly, many family law professionals have had limited knowledge of the child protection system. In recent years, however, those with experience in child custody may have noticed a strange overlap between child protection and child custody. Increasing numbers of child custody cases involve allegations of child abuse of a sexual kind—parental alienation (PA). For that reason, we recently published an article in *Child and Family Law Abstract*.

Myers & Mancoske (2023) that may be useful to readers of the APSAC Alert. We will discuss some of the essential points of that article here.

Parental alienation is said to be present when a child of a divorced couple refuses or refuses contact with one of the parents, when it is thought that the preferred parent has persuaded the child to take this position, and when the rejected parent is said to have perpetrated one or more of the behaviors listed above. We hasten to say that PA does occur frequently, although its frequency is not known. APSAC (2023) issued a [position statement](#) on the use of PA concepts.

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