



Governor's Council on
Child Safety and
Family Empowerment

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON CHILD SAFETY AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT
Hybrid Meeting
January 16, 2024, 10:00 AM

1700 West Washington Street, Suite 200, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
A general meeting of the Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment
convened on **January 16, 2024**, with notice duly given.

Members Present (24)	Members Absent (03)
Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair	Malcolm Hightower
Colleen McNally, Co-Chair	James Molina
Jillian Aja	Leslie Reprogle
*Berisha Black	
*Det. Lorraine Zannini (proxy for Sergeant Jeremy Brazell)	
Pastor Terry Crist	
*Obed Escobar	
Marie Fordney	
Tonya Hamilton	
*Dr. Lorrie Henderson	
Leah Landrum Taylor	
Claire Louge	
David Lujan	
*Sara Micflikier (proxy for Rachel Mitchell)	
Paul Mulligan	
*Darlene Newsom	
*Katie O'Dell	
*Hope Kopp (proxy for Kathryn Blades Ptak)	
*Abi Saifi	
*Torrie Taj	
*Jeff Taylor	
*Mark Upton	
Ginger Ward	
Richard Yarbough	
Staff & Guests Present (04)	
Amy Peep, GOYFF	Ann Carver, GOYFF
Chantel Hutchinson, GOYFF	Dr. Nagisa Kondo, Presenter

**Indicates Virtual Attendance*

Call to Order

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, called the [Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment \(CSFE\)](#) meeting to order at **10:06 AM** with **24** members and **four** staff/guests present. She reviewed the Council meeting procedures, welcomed all those joining via Zoom, and thanked them for their flexibility.

Approval of Minutes

- With the quorum met, **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **October 10, 2024**, meeting minutes before requesting a motion to approve them as drafted.

- **Claire Louge** moved to approve the meeting minutes as drafted.
- **David Lujan** seconded the motion.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, asked to discuss the minutes, and no members requested amendments.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, called a vote, and at **10:11 AM**, the motion to approve the meeting minutes as drafted passed with no dissenting votes.

Department of Child Safety Update

- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, introduced **Deputy Director David Lujan** to provide an update on behalf of the [Arizona Department of Child Safety \(DCS\)](#).
 - **David Lujan** announced to the Council that his last day at the DCS is January 31, 2025, and that he will take on the role of Executive Director at the [Arizona School for the Arts](#).
 - Since the last Council meeting, the [United States Department of Justice \(DOJ\)](#) released a [Letter of Findings](#) against DCS stating that the Department acted discriminatorily against families protected by [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#).
 - This has been an ongoing investigation since 2020.
 - DCS wants to enter into a settlement agreement and has a meeting scheduled in a few weeks to discuss the next steps.
 - Areas that the Department has already taken action on:
 - All DCS staff are required to undergo bias and empathy training.
 - The Department has also implemented a six-part ASU training program that addresses empathy, trauma, and cultural responsiveness.
 - As of January 2025, 71% of all DCS staff have completed the required training.
 - The Cultural Brokers Pilot Program, developed over the last year, is expected to launch in the Summer of 2025. The Pilot Program aims to address the disproportionality in the child welfare system against African American and Black families in Arizona.
- **Paul Mulligan** asked **David Lujan** what he was most proud of during his time at DCS.
 - **David Lujan** responded that he is most proud of the work his department has done to prevent families from entering the child welfare system.
 - Partnerships between **Claire Louge** at [Prevent Child Abuse Arizona](#) and **Berisha Black** at [Pilgrim's Rest Foundation](#).
 - Creating the [DCS Office of Prevention](#) within DCS.
 - **David Lujan** also mentioned that he is proud of the reduced number of children in foster care and that the Department has maintained staffing levels at 92% for over a year.
- **Tonya Hamilton** thanked **David Lujan** for his service, commitment to Arizona families, and partnership with the Council.
- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, stated that she had seen many DCS Directors during her time and thanked **David Lujan** for his efforts.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, stated that this is the hardest job in state government, and she is grateful to **David Lujan** for saying yes and staying for so long in the position.
- **Torrie Taj** thanked **David Lujan** for his incredible work and efforts on prevention. She stated this is especially important for teens in the extended foster care system.
- **Leah Landrum Taylor** thanked **David Lujan** for connecting with community organizations, taking the feedback seriously, and seeing those ideas implemented. She hopes the new DCS Director will continue this practice and prioritize it.

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Family Advocacy Center

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** from the [Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Family Advocacy Center \(FAC\)](#).
 - **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** has been the director of the FAC since May 2023. She has worked in mental health for nineteen years, including as a clinician at the Department of Corrections in Illinois and Arizona and as a director of Substance Use Disorder Residential Treatment facilities in the Phoenix area.

- She has also volunteered 12 hours weekly with the Phoenix Fire Department as a crisis response team member for two years. At the SRPMIC FAC, Dr. Kondo facilitates debriefings of existing cases, coordinates the multidisciplinary team, and manages the department's day-to-day operations.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** began her presentation by explaining that the initial concept of the advocacy center arose in response to a multi-faceted initiative within the [Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community \(SRPMIC\)](#) titled "Protecting Community Children Project," sparked by the tragic death of two young siblings in 2008. Officially established on October 1, 2009, the SRPMIC FAC aims to bring different community departments together to conduct child crime investigations more effectively through mandated collaboration.
 - The mission of the FAC is to create a safe, secure, and supportive environment for investigating cases of child abuse and neglect through collaborative, multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approaches aimed at minimizing further trauma to children and other vulnerable victims while also respecting the cultural values and traditions of the SRPMIC.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** explained that in 2014, the FAC began accepting cases involving abuse of the elderly and vulnerable adults. In 2016, it also started accepting cases related to adult abuse, strangulation, and sexual assault.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** identified three problems during the early years after establishing the FAC.
 - 1. Departments were not sharing critical information.
 - 2. Departments did not understand the roles of partner departments.
 - 3. Lack of trust and interaction among partner departments.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** explained identifying several strengths.
 - 1. Strong infrastructure and Tribal Council who were committed to improvement.
 - 2. A competent IT Department that can facilitate information sharing while guarding confidentiality.
 - 3. FAC and MDT partners are all government departments, easing the creation of new policies and procedures.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** explained the goals and priorities the FAC implemented within the first few years after its establishment.
 - Create a FAC to co-locate and facilitate investigations.
 - Developing a new department and moving law enforcement detectives and Child Protective Services (CPS) investigators into a shared workspace.
 - Update technology to allow access to vital information.
 - Implement Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)/Guardians ad Litem (GAL), and parent advocates in all dependency cases.
 - Mandated collaboration.
 - Improve laws and policies surrounding permanency.
 - Implement training and oversight to support evidence-based and trauma-informed decisions.
 - A challenge that occurred: Encouraging employees who normally never interacted to work as a unified team was a long-term effort.
- **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** explained that the FAC operates based on referrals. However, she clarified that individuals are not able to refer themselves. Each department within the FAC is respected with centralized efforts to reduce trauma to victims and the duplication of effort by team members. (See slide 18 for the graphic of the FAC's model)
 - Services offered:
 - MDT meetings.
 - Case Review and Coordination Meeting.
 - Monthly MDT follow-ups on all open cases.
 - Scheduling/hosting forensic interviews.
 - Trauma-based counseling.
 - Community outreach and education.
 - Victim advocacy services.
 - Family support and referrals.
 - Who they serve:
 - Any person who is a victim or witnesses of a violent crime, physical/sexual assault, abuse, and/or neglect within the SRPMIC boundaries and their non-offending caregivers.
 - The efforts to support children and families:

- Immediate services: Crime victims and families receive immediate therapy and advocacy services at the FAC rather than being referred to another department or provider.
- Trained staff: Members of FAC Core Staff and partner department professionals are all trained in trauma-informed practices.
- Environment: Adults have access to safe and private waiting areas and restrooms, allowing them to avoid waiting in substation rooms next to their abusers. The FAC is a secure facility for children, equipped with toys, outdoor space, entertainment, and food, ensuring that children are not left in patrol vehicles or substations.
- **Paul Mulligan** asked for further clarification about how the FAC has implemented educational neglect as child abuse.
 - **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** answered that the FAC believes not sending small children to school is detrimental to their well-being and that this policy is relatively new (implemented in October 2024).
 - **Dr. Nagisa Kondo** emphasized that the goal is not to arrest the parents but to engage with the family. It is essential to understand why the children are not attending school and to encourage parents to participate in treatment programs or complete parenting classes if necessary.
- To view **Dr. Nagisa Kondo's** presentation, [click here](#).

Southern Arizona Children's Advocacy Center

- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, introduced **Marie Fordney**, one of the newest Council Members, to discuss the [Southern Arizona Children's Advocacy Center \(SACAC\)](#) and the services it provides.
 - **Marie Fordney** is the executive director of the SACAC, where she works to engage new partners, raise community awareness, and extend the center's reach to prevent and address child maltreatment.
 - **Marie** has dedicated her entire career to serving Southern Arizona, where she has built professional teams focused on transforming the lives of children and families, including youth in foster care and families living in poverty. She has expertise in evaluation, has served as the Principal Investigator for a Randomized Control Trial, and co-authors scholarly journal articles on human subject research. Throughout her career, she has primarily worked in prevention and consistently relies on the voices of those she serves to guide her efforts.
- **Marie Fordney** began her presentation by explaining that the SACAC is the primary resource in southern Arizona for responding to reports of child abuse, serious maltreatment, and instances where children have witnessed violence or other crimes. Since its opening in 1996, the SACAC has served over 25,000 children.
 - The mission of the SACAC is to provide a safe, compassionate, healing environment for children who have been victims or witnesses to a crime.
 - The Center's core values include:
 - Collaboration: They work with public and private partners to prevent and address abuse.
 - Quality: They strive for excellence in all they do for the sake of the children and families they serve.
 - Impact: They work to change the lives they touch for the community they call home.
 - Children are twice as likely to receive necessary medical care and seven times more likely to obtain counseling, and when filing felony charges, the prosecution rates nearly double.
- **Marie Fordney** explained that the services that the SACAC provides:
 - Mandatory Reporter Training.
 - Forensic Interviews:
 - Completed in a trauma-informed way.
 - **Marie Fordney** states that the way that you initiate the transition from abuse to safety can have lifelong impacts on children. If done incorrectly, these children may experience substance use, mental health disorders, physical health implications (due to toxic stress), and interactions with the criminal justice system later in life.
 - Medical services are offered on-site.
 - Child and family advocacy:
 - Providing advocacy to parents, thinking through what they would need both short-term and long-term (e.g., better-paying job).
 - Parents and children use services for as long as they need them.
 - Provide on-site counseling.

- **Marie Fordney** explained that Arizona has 23 child and family advocacy centers. However, she mentioned a disparity of resources among centers outside of Maricopa County.
 - The SACAC is the only accredited advocacy center south of Pinal County and serves Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, and Santa Cruz County. Totalling approximately 23,000 miles.
- **Marie Fordney** explained that Mandatory Reporter Training is available for professionals who work with children, enabling them to recognize signs of abuse and distinguish it from poverty.
 - In Pima County, on average, there are 9,000 investigations of child abuse per year. The SACAC sees approximately 1,000 cases because the Center is only involved when intense investigation, coordination, and evidence collection is necessary.
- **Marie Fordney** explained that the SACAC operates collaboratively (see slides 10 and 11).
 - The Center does not make decisions about whether an investigation is needed or not.
 - Also, the SACAC is working to address the underlying conditions in families and communities that may facilitate abuse.
- **Marie Fordney** stated that the SACAC offers a Family Support Program focusing on youth substance youth prevention.
 - Classes for Parents/Caregivers and Children.
 - Trauma-Informed Parenting:
 - Providing skills and support for parents and caregivers of children who have experienced abuse.
 - Book Club.
 - Open to the public.
 - Offered to those interested in regaining their parental rights with the hope of building a community.
- **Marie Fordney** explained the other training offered at the SACAC.
 - Protective Factor Training.
 - Parents learn protective factors and how to implement them in their homes.
 - Training for Professionals:
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences.
 - Trauma Informed Care.
 - Psychological First Aid.
 - Resilience Project.
 - Within Pima County
- **Marie Fordney** stated the SACACs goals for the future.
 - Streamlining services for victims:
 - Pima County lacks a family advocacy center; the SACAC is working to evaluate whether it should take on this responsibility or if another organization would be better suited.
 - Geographic area:
 - Developed a Family Safety Center in Nogales, Arizona. The SACAC provides forensic interviews, and the Safety Center is building up the medical services it can offer the community.
 - Participating in statewide initiatives:
 - The balance between investigating when necessary, ensuring fairness for the accused, and supporting the families.
- **Claire Louge** stated that she appreciates the whole person, whole family approach the SACAC has taken. She sees this as the place the entire state needs to lead to.
- **Tonya Hamilton** commented that she was able to tour the SACAC and commended **Marie Fordney** and her staff for their passion and commitment.
- To view **Marie Fordney's** presentation, [click here](#).

2025 Council Purpose & Structure

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, noted that it has been two years since Governor Katie Hobbs took office, and the Council has been attentive to her priorities. She explained that the [Governor's Office for Youth, Faith and Family \(GOYFF\)](#) and the Co-Chairs have been discussing the composition and workgroups of the Council to determine how to make the most of everyone's time during and between meetings. She invited input from members today or later to ensure that their expertise is included in these discussions.

- **Pastor Terry Crist** asked for clarification on the status of the Council as a public body.
 - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, responded that they are not dismantling the Council and are asking how to best utilize everyone's time and energy—for example, bringing what members are doing (leveraging what is happening in the state), identifying gaps, and determining how to operationalize it.
- **Ginger Ward** stated that she has enjoyed hearing the presentations but would like to know how to support other members and what action the Council can take.
- **Marie Fordney** suggested creating a strategic plan that includes what the state should try to accomplish over the next 5-10 years.
- **Leah Landrum Taylor** stated that the need to identify the priorities to focus on, adding it is important the Council engages with children and families during this discussion.
- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, clarified that the Council is under the Governor's umbrella and they can provide recommendations to the GOYFF and the Governor.
- **Claire Louge** asked if she could see the Governor's priorities.
 - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, answered that the GOYFF staffer will provide the information following the meeting.
- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, announced her resignation from the Council as a member and Co-Chair. She added that she is proud of what has been accomplished by the Council since she joined in 2018. She has appreciated the perspective and expertise it has offered the community and she is excited to see how it will expand its reach to all parts of the state, grow, and improve in the future.
 - **Pastor Terry Crist** thanked **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, for her work, mainly on [Family Reunification Day](#).
 - **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, emphasized this, stating that **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, is a major reason for Arizona's change in reunification.

Council Member Updates

- **Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, invited members to give updates to the Council.
 - **Tonya Hamilton** stated that the GOYFF will release two Request for Grant Applications (RFGAs) later this year. She encouraged Council members to review the approximately \$100,000 available in grant funds and distribute the information as necessary.
 - Spring 2025: [Arizona Parents Commission on Drug Education and Prevention](#)
 - Fall 2025: [Children's Justice Act](#)
 - **Amy Peep** announced that on behalf of the [Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona](#), community members are invited to join the GOYFF for a free, virtual Human Trafficking 101 training facilitated by the [Arizona Anti-Trafficking Network \(AATN\)](#) on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, from 10:30 to 11:30 AM. [Register here](#).

Upcoming Meeting

- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, reminded members that the next meeting will be on March 20, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the Executive Tower in a hybrid format for members to attend in person or virtually.

Adjournment

- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.
 - **Pastor Terry Crist** moved to adjourn the Council meeting.
 - **Ginger Ward** seconded the motion.
- **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, asked if any further discussion was needed.
- With no other discussion needed, **Colleen McNally, Co-Chair**, called for a vote. At **11:46 AM**, the motion to adjourn the meeting passed with no dissenting votes.

Dated 17 of January 2025
Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment
Respectfully Submitted By:
Amy Peep
GOYFF