



Council on Child  
Safety and  
Family Empowerment

GOVERNOR DUCEY'S OFFICE OF YOUTH, FAITH AND FAMILY  
COUNCIL ON CHILD SAFETY AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

**Meeting Minutes**

**May 7, 2019**

**10:00 AM**

**Governor's 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**

1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

A general meeting of the Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment was convened on May 7, 2019 at the Governor's 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

<b>Members Present (17)</b>	
<b>Angela Ducey</b> , Chair, First Lady of Arizona	<b>Zora Manjencich</b> , Assistant Chief Counsel, Attorney General
<b>Andrea Stuart</b> , Executive V.P. Staff Services & Care, Arizona Baptist Children's Association (on phone)	<b>Vicki Mayo</b> , Founder and CEO, The Touchpoint Solution
<b>Berisha Black</b> , Director, Arizona Foster Care Initiatives	
<b>Colleen McNally</b> , Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Maricopa County, Retired	<b>Members Absent (11)</b>
<b>Darlene Newsom</b> , CEO, UMOM New Day Centers	<b>Kathryn A. Pidgeon</b> , Co-Chair, Adoption Attorney
<b>Greg McKay</b> , Director, AZ Department of Child Safety (Proxy was Magdalena Jorquez, Senior Legislative Counsel)	<b>Warren H. Stewart Jr.</b> , Pastor, Church of the Remnant
<b>Janet L. Garcia</b> , Arizona Senior Director, Casey Family Programs	<b>Katie O'Dell</b> , City Care Pastor, Hillsong Phoenix
<b>Molly Dunn</b> , Director, FosterEd Arizona	<b>James D. Molina</b> , Director, Step up Arizona
<b>Julie K. O'Dell</b> , Statewide Adoption Director, DCS	<b>Jay A. Cory</b> , President and CEO, Phoenix Rescue Mission
<b>Obed Escobar</b> , Regional Director, Alliance Defending Freedom	<b>Terry M. Crist</b> , Pastor, Hillsong Phoenix
<b>Paul S. Mulligan</b> , President and CEO, Catholic Charities (via phone)	<b>Richard Yarbough</b> , Executive Director, Pilgrim Rest Foundation
<b>Mark Upton</b> , President and CEO, Christian Family Care	<b>Leslie Y. Reprogle</b> , Founder, Agape Adoption Agency Arizona (
<b>Roy T. Dawson</b> , Director, Arizona Center for African American Resources (phone)	<b>Kate Brophy McGee</b> , Arizona State Senator
<b>Torrie Taj</b> , CEO, Child Crisis Arizona	<b>Jeffrey James Taylor</b> , Chair, Salvation Army Advisory Board
<b>Lorrie Henderson</b> , President/CEO of JFCS (via phone)	<b>Marcia Stanton</b> , Senior Injury Prevention Specialist, PCH
<b>Staff/Guests Present (22)</b>	
<b>Maria Fuentes</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Tonya Hamilton</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Malcolm Hightower</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Emily Uline-Olmstead</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Leona Morales</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Susan Alameda</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Terrilyn Miller</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Jennie Hedges</b> , National Center for Youth Law
<b>Chanette Curtis</b> , AZ DCS	<b>Laura Mitchell</b> , The Bob and Renee Parsons Foundation
<b>Emily Jenkins</b> , Honoree	<b>Mayra Flores</b> , The Bob and Renee Parsons Foundation
<b>Jen Laird</b> , RTI International	<b>Dr. Shefali Gandhi</b> , Childhelp Children's Center of Arizona
<b>Michelle Francois</b> , National Center for Youth Law	<b>Spike</b> , Bikers Against Child Abuse
<b>Andrea Molina</b> , National Center for Youth Law	<b>Grumpy</b> , Bikers Against Child Abuse
<b>Meghan Arrigo</b> , National Center for Youth Law	<b>Tamar Shindel</b> , Citizen
<b>Arayol Larson</b> , National Center for Youth Law	<b>Tycorra Nobles</b> , Citizen

## 1. Call to Order

Mrs. Angela Ducey, Chair, called the Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment meeting to order at 10:13 AM with seventeen members present and ten members absent.

## 2. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Angela Ducey requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2019 Council meeting. Mrs. Torrie Taj moved to approve the minutes as drafted and Ms. Berisha Black seconded. The motion passed with unanimous vote.

## 3. Special Recognition

Mrs. Angela Ducey, Chair, recognized Arizona Council of Human Service Providers CEO Emily Jenkins for her passion for ensuring that children and families receive the services that are available to them. Mrs. Ducey highlighted her accomplishments and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

## 4. Childhelp Children's Center of Arizona

Mrs. Ducey introduced Dr. Shefali Gandhi, Director of Clinical Services at Childhelp Children's Center of Arizona. She is a Licensed Psychologist, licensed by the Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners since 2008. The goal of Dr. Gandhi's supervisory and clinical work is to create trauma-informed programs and settings in which families and providers understand the impact of ACEs, trauma, and toxic stress so patients can heal and grow successfully with a sense of completion and hope. Her work at Childhelp Children's Center has strengthened the trauma-informed clinical services team through treatment, consultation, supervision, and programmatic growth adding programs including sensory-modulation occupational therapy, an in-home therapy program, and a program that specifically focuses on treatment and outreach for children who have been victimized as a result of parental opioid abuse. She serves on the Executive Board of the not for profit, Mothers Awareness on School-Aged Kids (MASK). She was the recipient of MASK's Education Award, honoring community members whose efforts are dedicated to providing psychoeducation to children and families on current social-emotional challenges.

Dr. Gandhi said the group is making great strides with the help of grant funding that we were awarded in 2018. She thanked Governor Doug Ducey and First Lady Angela Ducey and was honored to honor them during the National Day of Hope because the attention that they have brought to child safety in Arizona. Dr. Gandhi stressed that there is a definite overlap of substance abuse, child abuse and domestic violence. She said that the Childhelp National hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD now has a text option to expand their reach. They average 100,000 calls each year and their headquarters are located in Phoenix, but also have an office in Washington, DC. They are currently piloting live chat as well. She highlighted their mobile response unit that has areas for medical examines, along with a sound-proof room for interviewing. This is especially needed in the rural areas of Arizona where access to services is hindered by location.

Childhelp Advocacy centers are a one-stop shop model that allows for providing multiple services at once. This also is beneficial for the child victim, as he or she only has to tell the story one time. They also offer the following services: Sensory Modulation, In-home family therapy, On-site individual and family therapy. Dr. Gandhi said that they are also helping parents heal from their own cycle of abuse. She said that they have received the Office for Victims of Crime grant for Opioids. In 2016, Opioid use contributed to the removal of 430,000 children from their homes in the US. Dr. Gandhi said the 2017 statistics have not been released yet, but anticipates that reports will be higher. She said that research shows that for parents who are using, they tend to be forgetful and non-responsive to their child's needs. They prioritize their use over their child's care. She said that they provide resources to the family so the parents will be able to heal and return to parenting. She said that parents can heal and recover and so can the children.

- Julie O'Dell asked about what follow-up is done after they parents finished treatment.

- Dr. Gandhi said that they do follow-up and they can always come back to the program if they need to.
- Mrs. Ducey commended the Childhelp for being tremendous asset to Arizona and reminded everyone that they recently were awarded national funding to sustain their hotline.

## 5. FosterEd Arizona

Mrs. Ducey introduced Dawn Wallace, Special Assistant to the Governor (Director of the Office of Education and Education Policy Advisor), who introduced Molly Dunn, Director of FosterEd Arizona; Michelle Francois, Senior Director of the National Center for Youth Law; Jennifer Laird, Program Director of RTI International; and Jennie Hedges, Education Liaison for Pima County. Wallace said that the work of FosterEd aligns with Gov. Ducey's priorities of doing all that we can to help the underserved children in Arizona. With the help of the legislators, they created a "fast pass" for foster youth who wanted to attend any of the three state universities where there was an enrollment waitlist for a program. She added that the bipartisan work is what helped bring this program statewide.

Laird said that there are at least three adults on each child's team with the goal of removing the barriers that many foster youth face. She said the most common is IEP and 504 plans. The first group of 4,000 foster youth in grades 9-12 were received at least two months of support from the program. Of those, the majority graduated from school, or had a positive progression to the next grade level. This was an 11% increase from 66% to 77%. The next step in the research is to look at the next report that will come out in December that will cover two years of data.

Hedges shared a story of a second grade student who was having difficulties at school and was having behavioral issues where he was at risk of harming himself and others around him. She said that everyone with a vested interest in his success could not work together. She finally spoke to his biological parents about the need for him to have an IEP evaluation. They originally did not understand the concept. Their consent was needed for it to occur. After their discussion, they agreed to have it done and the child was relocated to a school that could accommodate his needs and allow for him to thrive. In the end, his parents felt more empowered to make those decisions for him.

Dunn said the work that has been done could not have been possible without the collaboration with their partnering school districts, juvenile courts and philanthropy. The Bob and Renee Parsons Foundation has been a huge support in the movement and they would not have been able to do it without them.

- Ms. Black asked if there was a strategy for bullying.
  - Ms. Dunn said that it most often arises when there is a disciplinary action being taken. She said that one of the challenges as they grown the program is looking at how they can be more proactive. She added that they are largely in responsive mode, but would love to be more proactive.
- Ms. Taj asked how large is their staff.
  - Ms. Dunn said that there are 12 education liaisons and 4 administrators, along with 6 additional staff in California who support their website.
- Mrs. Ducey said that the state currently has 800 children ageing out of the system and only 350 in FosterEd. She asked if it is due to a lack of liaisons.
  - Ms. Francois said that it is a fact that they have been struggling with and are looking to see what it takes to see larger results in serving the young people with the highest needs.
  - Ms. Dunn added that they are hoping to serve closer to 500 next year.

- Ms. Newsom commended the group for the work that they have done so far and said that UMOM has 46 children in their care and was amazed that so many said that elementary school was the last grade that they attended.
- Mrs. Ducey asked why they needed the consent of the biological parents to have an IEP completed for the student.
  - Ms. Hedges said that, legally, biological parents still hold education rights to the child. The Court would have to limit those rights and a surrogate would have to be appointed. The goal is still reunification until it is not.
- Mrs. Ducey asked if there is any peer-to-peer support.
  - Ms. Francois said it is not currently a part of the model, but it is something that they would have to consider. They are planning to meet with the liaisons and see what barriers they are experiencing, along with what can be done regarding practice and policy on how services are offered.
  - Ms. Dunn added that they now have college students who are serving as tutors.
- Mrs. Ducey thanked representatives from the Bob and Renee Parsons Foundation who were in attendance for their support.

## 6. Update on Recent and Upcoming Events

Mrs. Ducey introduced Director Maria Cristina Fuentes of the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family. Director Fuentes spoke of the recent events focused on child abuse prevention, sexual assault prevention and our faith-based communities. She added that she was able to accompany Gov. Ducey and the First Lady to Washington DC on their week-long trip to highlight the work that Arizona is doing in the area of child well-being. Director Fuentes added that she and Sen. Brophy MaGee visited Hushabye Nursery, a recovery center for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, which focuses on helping mothers battling substance abuse and their exposed newborns stay together. She commended their family-centered, family-focused treatment. She added that May is Foster Care Awareness month and GOYFF is hosting a faith-based event focused on child care on May 10. Also, on May 10, she will accompany Mrs. Ducey to an event for young children in foster care that focuses on internet safety. They plan to surprise the children with new laptops. On May 21, GOYFF will be hosting another faith-based event focused on child well-being. She added that May is also Reunification Month.

## 7. Subcommittee Reports

### Prevention Subcommittee

Ms. Vicki Mayo, Subcommittee Chair, spoke about the need to educate the public about quality and need for more child care resources. 41,000 families are using child care subsidies in Arizona and 34% of those are children in the DCS system. She added that there is a gap and the most vulnerable children need to be a part of quality child care.

### African American Children and Families Subcommittee

Mr. Roy Dawson, Subcommittee Chair, spoke about a focus group held on March 21 at the First Pentecostal Church from 6:30- 8 p.m. and is sponsored by the Arizona Center for African American Children and the ASU Center for Child Well-Being. Thirty individuals attended. Ten were asked to respond to the questionnaire and the results will be discussed at their next subcommittee meeting in May. Two additional groups will be scheduled in zip codes 85041 and 85042.

### Support Subcommittee

Ms. Black, Subcommittee Chair, reported that the ACEs support group pilot meeting will be held.

### Partnerships Subcommittee

Ms. Garcia, Subcommittee Chair, said that she is transitioning off from being the chair of this committee and more info will come.

### Outreach Subcommittee

Ms. Katie O'Dell, Subcommittee Chair, was not in attendance.

**8. Call to the Public**

Mrs. Ducey conducted a call to the public. There were no requests to speak by the public.

**9. Future Meeting Dates and Adjournment**

Mrs. Ducey noted the following meeting dates:

- September 12, 2019
- November 14, 2019

Mrs. Ducey requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Zora Manjencich motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mayo. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.