

**Children's Justice Act
State of Colorado
Fiscal Year 2021
Application Report
and Three Year Assessment**

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration on Children, Youth and Families**

Children's Bureau

Office on Child Abuse and Neglect

Log No. ACYF-CB-PI-21-01

Grantee Identifying Information:

Grantee Agency: Joe Homlar
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Table of Contents

Part I: Assurance Letter.....	p. 4
Part II: Task Force Membership and Function.....	p. 5
Part III: Prior Year Projects/Activities and Performance Report.....	p. 14
Part IV: Prior Year Budget Expenditure Line Item.....	p. 19
Part V: Three-year Assessment.....	p. 19
Part VI: Proposed Activities/Application.....	p. 22
Part VII: Certification of Lobbying Form.....	p. 25



May 28, 2021

Amanda Barlow, Acting Commissioner
Administration for Children and Families
Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Children's Justice Act Report and Application FY2021, Log No: ACYF-CB-PI-21-01

Dear Acting Commissioner Barlow:

This is to certify that:

1. The State received the FY 2020 child abuse and neglect Basic State Grant and continues to comply with the requirements stipulated in Section 106(b) of the Act; and
2. The State has maintained a State multidisciplinary task force on children's justice; and
3. The State has adopted or continues to progress in adopting recommendations of the State Task Force; and
4. The State will make such reports to the Secretary as may reasonably be required, including an annual report on how assistance received under this program was expended throughout the State, with particular attention to the areas described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of Section 107(a); and
5. The State will maintain and provide access to records relating to activities under the Children's Justice Act (CJA); and,
6. The State will participate in at least one Federally-initiated CJA Conference each year that the grant is in effect, and is authorized to use grant funds to cover travel and per diem expenses for two (2) CJA representatives (CJA Coordinator and Task Force Chairperson) to attend the meeting.

All award letters are to be sent to Joe Homlar, the Director of the Division of Child Welfare at the Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman Street, 2nd Floor, Denver, CO 80203.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to have the State of Colorado fulfill the vision of the Children's Justice Act.

Sincerely,

Michelle Barnes
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Human Services

Section 107(a) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (the Act) authorizes grants to States for the purpose of assisting States in developing, establishing and operating programs designed to improve:

1. the assessment and investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect cases, including cases of suspected child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child and the child’s family;
2. the assessment and investigation of cases of suspected child abuse-related fatalities and suspected child neglect-related fatalities;
3. the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
4. the assessment and investigation of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are suspected victims of child abuse or neglect.

Part II: Task Force Membership and Function

Colorado maintains an active Children’s Justice Act Task Force per the requirements set forth in Section 107(c) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Public Law 111-320) and Colorado’s current membership roster is as follows:

Task Force Membership

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Maureen “Mo” Basenberg	Executive Director, Safe Passage	Ms. Basenberg, MPA became Executive Director of Safe Passage Children's Advocacy Center in September 2016. She was Director at Childhelp Children's Center in Phoenix, AZ for nine years where she oversaw one of the largest children's advocacy centers in the country, as well as a mobile advocacy center that serves tribal areas. Ms. Basenberg also had the privilege of serving in the Arizona Governor's Office for eight years in a variety of roles including working with domestic violence and child abuse grants throughout the state. She has a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology and Theater from Grand Canyon University and a Master's in Public Administration from Arizona State University.	Child Advocate
Antonia Chiesa	Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Kempe Child Protection Team	Dr. Chiesa graduated from Louisiana State University Medical School and completed her residency and fellowship with the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Dr. Chiesa is currently a pediatrician at Children's Hospital Colorado in Aurora, Colorado, with a specialty in Child Abuse Pediatrics.	Health Professional

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Beth Collins	Specialist, Colorado Domestic Violence Program (DVP)	Ms. Collins provides support to DVP-funded organizations around Colorado and works to improve responses for people who have experienced domestic violence. Before joining DVP, Ms. Collins worked as the advocacy director at Colorado’s statewide anti-domestic violence coalition and before that she had the privilege of working directly with survivors of domestic abuse for seven years in shelter and community settings. Ms. Collins received a Bachelor’s Degree in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Montana and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Denver.	Mental Health Professional
Jaramillo Burgar	Managing Chief Deputy District Attorney in the 18th Judicial District	Ms. Burgar has worked in the 18th Judicial District Attorney’s Office for nearly 10 years. Most of her time at the office has been spent working on investigations and cases involving vulnerable victims. Ms. Burgar spent two years working primarily with victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. For the last four years, she has worked exclusively with victims of child abuse and child sexual assault.”	Prosecuting Attorney
Andi Leopoldus	Statewide Coordinator, Colorado Children's Alliance	Ms. Leopoldus has been the Colorado Chapter Coordinator and Chapter Lobbyist for Colorado's accredited State Chapter of the National Children's Alliance, since 2005. She has managed three other associations in her career. With more than 25 years of experience at the Colorado State Capitol, she is knowledgeable and respected at the Legislature. Ms. Leopoldus has a B.A. in English from the University of Colorado-Boulder and an M.P.A. from the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs. She is the mother of two adult children and four grandchildren. Ms. Leopoldus and her husband live in Colorado Springs.	Children's Advocacy Center Representative

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Jennifer Richardson	Clinical Director, Shiloh House	Ms. Richardson joined Families First in 1987 and has directed the Family Support Services since 1990. Families First expertise lies in community programs such as, Parent as Teachers, Fatherhood Network, Let's Connect, Circle of Parents® and Family Support Line. Ms. Richardson's professional credentials include Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Addictions Counselor (CACIII), and national trainer for Circle of Parents®. Ms. Richardson represents Families Shiloh House by serving on the Colorado Children's Justice Task Force, the Kinship Conference planning committee, and the Douglas County Parenting Coalition.	Mental Health Professional
Michelle Jensen	Office of the Child's Representative (OCR)	Ms. Jensen is a graduate of California Western School of Law, where she focused her legal education on child and family law. Ms. Jensen received her Master of Social Work degree from San Diego State University, with a concentration in program administration. She is passionate about, and committed to, providing support and resources to vulnerable populations and families in transition. For the past 10 years, Ms. Jensen has been working in adoption, child welfare, family violence, dispute resolution, high-conflict divorce, and co-parenting.	Attorney for Children
Gretchen Russo	Judicial and Legislative Administrator, Office of Children, Youth & Families, Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)	Ms. Russo has spent over 20 years working in the child welfare and juvenile justice field. Prior to her current position, she was the Permanency Manager for the Division of Child Welfare, within CDHS where she oversaw a number of programs including adoption, foster care, kinship care, recruitment and retention, residential care and permanency programs. Ms. Russo spent over 7 years as a liaison between the Denver Juvenile Court and the Denver Department of Human Services. Ms. Russo graduated from Gonzaga Law School, in Spokane, Washington in 2004; prior to attending law school, she worked as a nurse case manager for foster children in Utah.	Child Protective Services

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Matt Holtman	CAPTA and Federal Funding Administrator, Division of Child Welfare, Office of Children, Youth & Families, Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)	Mr. Holtman has worked in the human services field for over 15 years, including work as a child welfare caseworker in Wisconsin and Colorado. He joined CDHS in September 2013 after working as a caseworker for Arapahoe County Department of Human Services. Mr. Holtman is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and is an adjunct professor at the Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver.	Child Protective Services CJA Task Force Co-Chair
Judge Valerie J. Robison	Civil/Criminal Court Judge, 21st Judicial District	Judge Robison grew up in Colorado and received her undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado in 1986 and her law degree from the University of Denver in 1991. Judge Robison was appointed to the bench on June 14, 2007 and sworn in on August 7, 2007. Prior to her appointment, she was serving Mesa County as the Chief Assistant County Attorney and supervised dependency and neglect attorneys. She served as the Interim Director for the Mesa County Department of Human Services until her judicial appointment. Since her appointment to the bench, Judge Robison was named Lead Judge for the Best Practices Court Team and was named Juvenile Judge of the Year in 2015.	Civil/Criminal Judge CJA Task Force Co-Chair
Faith Stevens	Detective, Arvada Police Department	Since 1991, Det. Stevens has served as a Crimes Against Children Detective with the Arvada Police Department. She has served as a Senior Detective and Crisis Negotiator for the Arvada Police Department, as well as an expert consultant for the Kempe Center Multidisciplinary State And Regional Team (START).	Law Enforcement Community

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Anne Tapp	Executive Director, Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (SPAN)	Ms. Tapp has served as the Executive Director of Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (SPAN) since 1997. Prior to holding this position, she was the SPAN Shelter Program Director for six years. Ms. Tapp sits on numerous local, statewide, and national boards and task forces addressing domestic violence and related issues.	Individual experienced in working with homeless children and youth
Magistrate Kellie Starritt	District Court Magistrate for the 7th Judicial District	Magistrate Starritt is currently a District Court Magistrate for Montrose and Delta Counties, handling the domestic relations, dependency & neglect and family treatment court dockets. She joined the 7th Judicial District in January 2017 and previously worked as a Mesa County Chief Deputy County Attorney supervising the Human Services Unit. She has over 15 years of experience in child welfare as both a guardian ad litem and county attorney, and has a passion for juvenile cases.	Civil/Criminal Judge
Tori Shuler	Director, Fostering Great Ideas	Ms. Shuler is the Denver Director of Fostering Great Ideas, a non-profit dedicated to improving the lives of children experiencing foster care. Ms. Shuler is passionate about preventing child abuse and neglect in the community and focusing on supportive relationships to provide connection and dignity for children/youth that have fallen victim to abuse and neglect. This passion stems from her own experience as a child in Colorado's foster care system.	Adult former victim of child abuse and or neglect
Ben Simonds	Case Coordinator	After completing his undergraduate degree in Criminology and Psychology, Mr. Simonds worked in Los Angeles County as a case manager at a residential treatment facility for juvenile delinquents. He is experienced in community/youth relationship building, and the criminal justice system. He has served as an active member of an interdisciplinary team focused on the social emotional development of juvenile offenders, crisis intervention/prevention, along with increasing accessibility to greater educational and vocational opportunities. His experience provides a lens into the inequities and hardships that are present throughout our communities, specifically in working with underrepresented and neglected youth. Furthermore, Mr. Simonds' passion is to reduce recidivism and foster healthier life outcomes. Mr. Simonds currently holds the role of Dependency & Neglect Case Coordinator with Advocates for Children CASA.	Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Meghan Baker	Facilities Attorney, Disability Law Colorado	Ms. Baker received her B.A. in 2003 from the University of Texas at Austin, and completed her J.D. and M.S.W. at the University of Houston in 2011. She interned at the Protection and Advocacy agency in Texas for over a year where she engaged in advocacy on behalf of multiple youth with disabilities in the foster care system, Medicaid appeals, and issues related to special education. She currently works as a staff attorney on the Facilities Team at Disability Law Colorado (DLC), the Protection and Advocacy agency for people with disabilities in the state of Colorado. She has worked at DLC since July 2017.	Individual experienced in working with children with disabilities
Jessica McKnight	Residential Case manager	Ms. McKnight started as a paraprofessional working directly with individuals with severe intellectual disabilities, then moved to direct care of individuals with varying intellectual disabilities and obtained knowledge in behavioral therapy. She completed her degree in psychology with a minor in special education and went to work for Rocky Mountain Human Services managing a case load of individuals with a wide range of abilities. Ms. McKnight has a brother who is 23 years old with down syndrome that she is co guardian and assists with his care; he is also her best friend. She has been a volunteer for Special Olympics for 15 years. In 2011 she started a foundation to host a fundraiser to benefit Special Olympics.	Individual experienced in working with children with disabilities
Christy Van Gaasbeek	Office of the Respondent Parents' Counsel (ORPC)	Mrs. Van Gaasbeek is the Training Director for the Colorado Office of Respondent Parents' Counsel (ORPC). As Training Director, Mrs. Van Gaasbeek designs and implements training programs for the attorneys, social workers, and other professionals who represent indigent respondent parents. Mrs Van Gaasbeek's goal is to ensure fair treatment for parents in the child welfare system through educating and empowering the professionals that represent them. Mrs Van GaasBeek has dedicated her legal career to helping underserved populations, through the representation of both respondent parents and the criminally accused. Prior to her work for the ORPC, Mrs. Van Gaasbeek worked as a public defender and private criminal defense attorney, where she learned the important difference a zealous advocate can make for the people they represent.	Individual experienced in working with children with disabilities

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Becky Wiggins	Senior Assistant County Attorney in Adams County	Ms. Wiggins is a Senior Assistant County Attorney in Adams County. In that capacity, she works primarily in the area of child protection law and supervises the support staff in the office. She has previously worked in the areas of child support, adult protection, mental health, and administrative hearings. Ms. Wiggins has been active in coordinating the bi-annual conference for the county attorneys around the state, the Convening, and the County Attorney Academy. She sits on the Fatality Review team and the SB 94 board. Ms. Wiggins is also an affiliate professor at Metropolitan State University. Prior to her work as an attorney, Ms. Wiggins was a CASA, a social worker and worked in the school system. She also remains active in the community and at her children's schools.	Prosecuting Attorney
Kate Stimson	Criminal Defense Attorney	Mrs. Stimson has been practicing criminal defense and civil litigation since 2005. Her practice includes defending people charged with all types of crimes, ranging from misdemeanors to homicide in federal and state courts throughout the state. She also represents people whose civil rights have been violated in federal court and limited civil litigation that stems from criminal allegations. She was a state public defender in the Denver trial office, an Assistant Federal Defender for the United States District Court, court-appointed counsel in federal and state court on death penalty cases, and is the Chair of the Standing Committee for the Criminal Justice Act Panel in federal court. She founded Stimson Stancil LaBranche Hubbard, a small boutique law firm specializing in criminal defense and civil litigation in 2020. All of the time she is not working she cares for and hangs out with her three children and amazing husband.	Defense Attorney

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Matthew DeHerrera-Lopez	Permanency Specialist	Mr. DeHerrera-Lopez has worked in the Human Services field for over 15 years, including working as a Home Supervisor for a CPA, Case Consultant with the Guardian Ad Litem's office in Arapahoe County, & Child Welfare Caseworker in Jefferson County. He joined CDHS in May 2019 after leaving his Caseworker position in Jefferson County. Mr. DeHerrera-Lopez holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology & a Master's Degree in Human Services. Mr. DeHerrera-Lopez has also adopted two children out of the child welfare system.	Parent and Representative of Parent Groups
Lacy Brown	Child/Adult Protection Supervisor, Archuleta County Department of Human Services	Mrs. Brown has worked in the field of social work for the past five years and currently holds the title as the Protective Services Supervisor for the Archuleta County Department of Human Services in the rural community of Pagosa Springs, Colorado. Mrs. Brown is a certified Child Welfare and Adult Protection Supervisor and specializes in Child Forensic Interviewing through Colorado Children's Alliance. Mrs. Brown is a voting Child Welfare SubPAC member for the Southwest Region and continues to be highly involved at the local and state level to better serve youth and families.	Child Protective Service Agencies
April Jenkins	Children, Youth and Family Services Manager El Paso County Department of Human Services	Mrs. Jenkins is a Children, Youth and Family Services Manager with the El Paso County Department of Human Services. Mrs. Jenkins received her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and began her career as Probation and Parole Officer. Mrs. Jenkins later received her master's degree in Human Services and has spent years serving families and children through Family Preservation Services in Alabama and Child Protection Services in Colorado. Since joining the El Paso County Department of Human Services in 2013, Mrs. Jenkins has found a passion for improving practice in child welfare services and has made system changes which have improved outcomes. These changes have include creating units that focus on children ages 0-3, improving practice involving substance exposed newborns, and implementing a nurse practitioner program to allow physical exams in the family's home alongside the Department of Human Services Caseworker.	Child Protective Service Agencies

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Task Force Designation</u>
Megan Kearsley	CIP Coordinator	<p>Ms. Kearsley, LPC, is the Court Improvement Program (CIP) Coordinator with the State Court Administrators Office. Her role as the CIP Coordinators is to lead efforts to improve Colorado’s Dependency and Neglect (D&N) courts through statewide partnership. The CIP focuses on supporting Best Practice Court Teams state-wide to make systems improvements for families involved in D&Ns. Ms. Kearsley is involved in FFPSA efforts state-wide, PIP implementation with the Department of Child Welfare, ICWA education, DANSR expansion, and serves as project director for the Regional Partnership Grant. Prior to being at SCAO, Ms. Kearsley was a service provider to families with Child Welfare involvement at Savio House. She delivered in-home child protection interventions and evidenced-based trauma therapy and went on to provide clinical supervision to clinicians in this capacity. Additionally, Ms. Kearsley has completed mental health assessments, short-term counseling at the Adams County Jail. She has a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of Northern Colorado. Ms. Kearsley has a passion for system-involved families and improving outcomes through targeted interventions and system change.</p>	Court Improvement Program Coordinator
Morgan Rhoades	Lived Experience	<p>Ms. Rhoades is a Parent Advocate with the Office of Respondent Parents Council and also as an office manager of a trucking company in Rifle, CO. She and her husband had their four boys ages 3-10, removed from their care for 4 months in 2019 due to a D & N case regarding Alcohol Abuse. During this case one of her biggest frustrations was the communication between all parties involved with the system. They were all working towards the same finish line, yet every separate party was taking a different route to get there. Ms. Rhoades loves the opportunity she has to work as a parent advocate so she can really try and bring together the parents, the caseworkers, and the attorneys to work together in accomplishing the goals for the best interests of the children involved! Ms. Rhoades helps bring the perspective of someone who’s been there, who saw where things were lacking first hand, and as someone who genuinely desires the betterment of the entire process for everyone involved.</p>	Parent with Lived Experience

Task Force Function

The Children's Justice Act Task Force in Colorado meets quarterly. The CJA Task Force meetings have been held virtually since March 2020 and attendance is very high compared to 2019. The following outlines the meeting activities that occurred during this reporting period (June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021), as well as the plan for the next reporting period (June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022). Detailed meeting agendas, minutes, and prior applications are publicly shared via [Children's Justice Act Task Force | Colorado Department of Human Services](#)

2020-2021 Overview of Task Force Meeting Activities (June 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021):

- August 2020: A number of new members were voted in and the Task Force discussed actively increasing diversity in its membership. The Task Force added an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) question to the new member request document. This has raised the awareness of the Task Force to these issues but overall diversity has not changed. The budget was presented and approved for the year and future funding opportunities were discussed.
- November 2020: The Task Force voted in two county staff as members and focused on actively recruiting a parent with lived experience to the Task Force. The coordination of CJA efforts and their alignment with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 3 Program Improvement Plan (PIP), Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), and Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) were discussed and shared. A small subgroup of CJA members was created to review the documents provided to youth and parents experiencing the dependency and neglect (D&N) court process. Three CJA awardees presented and provided updates to include how COVID-19 is impacting the awards' measurement and quantification of the tangible change each awardee wanted to see. These programs were discussed using the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) method to ensure they continued to meet the needs of the Task Force.
- February 2021: The Task Force voted in four new members, a CASA, a district attorney, a new CIP coordinator, and a mother with lived experience. Three CJA additional awardees presented and provided updates to include how COVID-19 is impacting the awards' measurement and quantification of the tangible change each awardee wanted to see. These programs were discussed using the CQI method to ensure they continued to meet the needs of the Task Force. The budget for the upcoming year was discussed but not voted on. The subgroup presented their finding on the documents for youth and parents and found them to be located in many dispersed locations, outdated, only in English, and underutilized. This subgroup will continue to work on a proposal to rectify this situation.
- May 2021: The Task Force approved the budget prior to this meeting via email. The subgroup presented at the CIP yearly convening and is drafting a proposal to reflect the required budget for the ongoing work. The CJA Annual Application Report and Three Year assessment was discussed. The annual CJA Task Force Meeting was also discussed.

Future Task Force meetings will focus on a continuing review of the current awardees' progress and expanding the Task Force's role in the ownership of documents for youth and families involved in our court system. Measurement and quantification of the tangible change each awardee is working towards will be discussed along with working in conjunction with other statewide incentives to include the PIP, APSR, FFPSA, and CIP.

Part III: Prior Year Projects/Activities and Performance Report

Request for Proposals

In 2012, the CJA Task Force developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for organizations throughout Colorado to receive CJA funding. Utilizing an RFP process strengthens the work of the CJA Task Force, increases the involvement and engagement of CJA Task Force members, and increases transparency with the community by making the funding opportunities public. The CJA Task Force reviews the applications and makes direct funding recommendations. There are currently two multiyear sub-recipients. The sub-recipients implement projects and report back to the CJA Task Force on progress, successes, replicability, dissemination, performance, and project barriers.

All grant sub-recipients align with one of the three categories outlined in CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A)(B)(C):

(A) Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as 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 that reduces the additional trauma to the child victim and the victim's family and which also ensures procedural fairness to the accused;

(B) Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques that 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; and

(C) Reform of State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, including sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.

In addition, all grant sub-recipients must also align with at least one of the CJA recommendations:

1. Ensure that all professionals involved in the assessment, investigation, and judicial handling of child abuse and/or neglect throughout the State of Colorado is well-qualified.
2. Ensure that all resources and training have the maximum impact.
3. Ensure that CJA-supported training does not duplicate other training available in Colorado.

4. Increase the dissemination and replication of effective models, programs and training.
5. Improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and/or neglect cases, including child sexual abuse and exploitation.

During the current reporting period, October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, the CJA Task Force funded projects through one RFP.

2019-2021 RFP

Two projects were chosen by the CJA Task Force to be CJA grant sub-recipients. These projects each fill unique gaps within the current system. A total of \$99,000 was awarded between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2021. Please note that this budget spans two different CJA awards:

Sub-Recipient	Total Award Amount 10-01-19 – 09-30-2021
Colorado Children’s Alliance	\$18,500
Colorado Seminary/Butler Institute	\$80,500
Total Award Amounts	\$99,000

Below is a short description of the CJA Grant sub-recipient activities:

- **Colorado Children’s Alliance:** Funds were awarded to train forensic interviewers using the Colorado model for forensic interviewing. Training is provided to forensic interviewers caseworkers in parts of the State where there is not a dedicated Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC), and any team member (law enforcement and human services caseworkers) who would benefit from the training. Training is provided on-site at a CAC, or virtually during COVID-19. The training is provided in three parts. Eighteen people were trained in Block I, 16 people were trained in Block II and 18 people were trained in Block III. During this funding period, there have been six forensic interview trainings with an average of eight participants in each training.

The impact of COVID-19 on the forensic interviewer training was mixed. The curriculum needed to be adapted for virtual training, which impacted the exercises that were conducted. The original in-person format was replaced with the utilization of individual virtual “rooms” for breakout groups, and trainers had to learn to engage participants virtually. However, the virtual platform yielded a positive impact to the participants. They did not need to travel to the training, stay overnight, and purchase meals, resulting in higher participation than usual from rural communities. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and Colorado CJA Recommendations #2, #4, and #5.*

- **Colorado Seminary/Butler Institute:** Funds were awarded to the Butler Institute, in partnership with Strum College of Law, to implement the recommendations from the needs assessment. Volunteer county attorneys and Butler staff developed a four-day academy on the knowledge and skills county attorneys need for their jobs. Facilitated by county attorneys and child welfare experts, the Academy was held at the Strum College of Law with introductions from the Deans of the School of Law and Social Work. The Academy emphasized social work, legal knowledge and skills, and culminated in a series of court simulations based upon a case scenario. Areas of focus were to reduce the time between the termination of parental rights and the finalized adoption, as indicated during Colorado’s 2017 CFSR, along with family engagement, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) appeals processes and best practices in representing the agency. The project partners with the Colorado Supreme Court’s “Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program” to offer a structured mentoring program featuring individual mentoring and group learning circles and led by an experienced county attorney that continues over one year.

COVID-19 had a dramatic effect on the implementation of the four-day in-person training. The Task Force and Butler jointly agreed to transition the fully in-person training to a hybrid e-Learning platform with some in-person experience. This included the creation of establishing subject matter teams, differentiate knowledge and skills to cover for e-Learning modules vs. in-person, develop storyboards, determine where the Learning Management System (LMS) home website should be (state, judicial, or DU), and engage in technical development. The Academy pivoted to develop an online course taking the knowledge from the in-person academy and putting them into asynchronous online modules. The course consists of seven modules taking learners through the life of a case using a case scenario to illustrate key concepts and provide practical guidance. Once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, the intent is to offer a hybrid model where knowledge is taught in the online modules and skills developed in a two-day in-person academy. This work along with one more podcast will be completed in 2021. The podcasts can be found at: <https://soundcloud.com/coloradoattorneytraining> This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and Colorado CJA Recommendations #1, #2, #4, and #5.

Other CJA Activities

While some of the CJA funds are distributed through the RFP process, a few CJA activities remained separate from the RFP process. This funding type allows for year to year changes in the scope of work to ensure alignment with the needs of the state and our service providers. Below are brief descriptions of each activity, along with the actual amounts expended between June 2020 and May 2021:

- **Alignment with the Colorado Child & Family Services Plan (CFSP), Annual Progress & Services Report (APSR), Child & Family Services Review (CFSR), Program Improvement Plan (PIP):** The chair of the state of Colorado’s CJA Task Force is also responsible for overseeing and supervising the state’s Federal Reporting Specialist who compiles the information and drafts the APSR along with the PIP progress reports. This deliberate organization structure ensures continuity and alignment between these critical federal reports and activities. At least one specific goal in Colorado’s PIP directly relates to the work the CJA Task Force is taking on in supporting the Colorado Seminary/Butler Institute. In addition, several members of the CJA Task Force has been involved in planning, drafting, editing, submission, and implementation of the PIP and will continue to provide a link between the CFSR and the CJA Task Force. The CJA Task Force is also looking to reprioritize how it distributes funds and alignment with the federal

outcomes measures is being closely examined. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and (C) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #3 and #4.*

- **D&N Resources for Youth and Families:** As a direct result of a more inclusive and broader CJA Task Force membership, a gap analysis was completed on the documentation and resources provided to youth and families during the D&N process, due to reflected experiences by members with lived experience. A subgroup of the CJA Task Force was created to review the current documents and. After a three-month review period, this subgroup presented to the full Task Force, and it was determined the current information was not used consistently across the state, was outdated, was almost exclusively in English, and owned by a wide number of partners. This subgroup will continue to meet and provide recommendations on the creation of resources that CJA Task could be responsible for updating and translating. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(B) and (C) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #2, #4, and #5.*

- **Court and Legal Representation Improvements:**

- **Colorado’s Office of the Child’s Representative (OCR):** The CJA Task Force approached OCR to identify opportunities to improve the capacity of Colorado’s guardians ad litem (GALs). The CJA Task Force provided funding to OCR to update a Guided Reference in Dependency (GRID) that guides GALs regarding laws and policies related to best interest child representation in D&N cases. The 2019-2020 update is currently being published as a pocket part for the print version of the GRID and has been incorporated into the electronic version of the GRID, which is available online: <http://www.coloradochildrep.org/grid/>. The GRID update was made available to other child welfare stakeholders, in addition to GALs. CJA Task Force funding also supported activities related to statewide engagement with GALs to assist in identifying training and support needs of GALs. The funding allowed for a 3-day intensive trial skills training, and the use of audio/visual services to ensure that rural attorneys have access to all OCR training. *These projects align with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and with Colorado CJA Recommendation #1,#2, #4 and #5.*

- **Colorado’s Office of the Respondent Parents’ Counsel (ORPC):** ORPC was created in July 2016 and was provided a small training budget upon its creation. The CJA Task Force approached ORPC to become a member of the CJA Task Force and to identify opportunities for improvement in the training and support of Respondent Parent Counsel (RPC) attorneys. The CJA Task Force provides training funds to ORPC for the training of parent representation attorneys and other professionals, as well as ORPC staff. CJA funding contributes significantly to ORPC’s Annual Fall Conference, a multi-day training and community-building event for ORPC contractors across the state. In FFY21, ORPC will partner with the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) and OCR to hold a joint conference in August 2021. The vast majority of CJA funds will be used to fund speakers and contractor attendance at this conference. ORPC hopes to foster a spirit of collaboration and

cooperation through this partnership. Other training activities that CJA funds have contributed to are training scholarships for ORPC staff and contractors to attend local and national pieces of training put on by other organizations, such as the Kempe Center Conference, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA) Annual Conference, and the NLADA Appellate Defender Training. *These activities align with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and with Colorado CJA Recommendation #1,#2, #4 and #5.*

Part IV: Prior Year Budget Expenditure Line Item

Category	Description	Budget	Actuals (FFY20)
Personnel	CDHS has a 100% time and effort reporting policy to ensure that costs associated with a grant are accurately represented. Salary and benefits costs are included for the following staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Assistant II (1.0 FTE) • Contracts and Grants Analyst (0.05 FTE) 	\$71,162	\$71,162
Travel	CJA Federal Grantees Meeting (2 representatives)	\$1,681	\$1,681
Operations	Supplies, Copying, Teleconferencing and Operations costs	\$109	\$109
Contractual	Court and Legal Representation Improvements – OCR and ORPC	\$63,443	\$63,443
	Colorado Children’s Alliance (CCA)	\$18,500	\$18,500
	DU Seminary - Butler Institute	\$80,500	\$73,378
Indirect	CDHS uses an actual cost allocation model to bill indirect costs. Historically, these costs have represented approximately 7% of the awarded grant amount.	\$25,101	\$25,101
TOTAL		\$260,496.00	\$253,374.00

Part V: Three-year Assessment

CJA Task Force Purpose: CJA Task Force will develop and establish programs designed to improve the cross system collaboration to meet the four goals of the CJA grant.

Colorado’s CJA Task Force was established prior to 2000

Overview of systems improvements that were made to address the Task Force goals/recommendations that resulted from the previous Three-Year Assessment

During the last year, the CJA Task Force continued progress on the three-year assessment of Colorado's investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and/or neglect. The CJA Task Force engaged in the following four activities:

1. To help focus the 2021 three-year assessment process, the CJA Task Force identified the areas of greatest concern related to the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect. Using a structured CQI process, the CJA Task Force members reviewed the goals originally established in 2015 and reapproved in 2018. These are:
 - a. Ensure that all professionals involved in the assessment, investigation, and judicial handling of child abuse and/or neglect throughout the State of Colorado are well-qualified;
 - b. Ensure that all resources and trainings have the maximum impact;
 - c. Ensure that CJA-supported trainings do not duplicate other trainings available in Colorado;
 - d. Increase the dissemination and replication of effective models, programs, and trainings; and
 - e. Improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and/or neglect cases, including child sexual abuse and exploitation.
2. Over the last three years, the CJA Task Force asked for verbal and written reports from all grant sub-recipients, including those awarded through the RFP process and outside of the RFP process. These reports included a description of activities, stories of success, stories of challenges, along with and challenges due to COVID-19.
3. The CJA Task Force studied the verbal and written reports from the RFP awardees to ensure the five goals of the CJA Task Force remained pertinent and effective in filling in the gaps of other groups within Colorado.
4. The CJA Task Force was given the opportunity to provide input on Colorado's 2021 APSR and work on subcommittee groups who are implementing Colorado's PIP.

Evaluation

The CJA Task Force engaged in the following activities:

1. The CJA Task Force evaluated the previous RFPs released by the Colorado CJA Task Force utilizing the CQI process. This evaluation included looking at what has gone well with previous RFPs, what has been worrisome with previous RFPs, and what the CJA Task Force would like to improve with the next RFPs.
2. The CJA Task Force engaged in structured, facilitated conversation to outline all gaps/opportunities identified during the review/evaluation activities to determine which areas could be best addressed through the CJA Task Force recommendations. These conversations were based on the CQI processes to plan, improve, and assess. The Task Force focused on the assessment aspect of this process during the evaluation phase.

3. The CJA Task Force identified ongoing activities they wish to explore to ensure on-going quality assurance and assessment of CJA funding in Colorado (see Proposed Activities). These activities were based on the final CFSR report and in conjunction with the PIP activities.

Progress Made

The CJA Task Force has had great successes since 2018. The Task Force has been able to increase and diversify its membership to ensure the Task Force is fully representative of Colorado as a whole. The Task Force has also been able to create and implement the County Attorney training. The CJA Task Force's support for CCA, OCR, ORPC, and CIP continue to provide opportunities to collaborate and provide knowledgeable legal support for all facets of the D&N process. Lastly, due to the gap analysis, the Task Force discovered a lack of supportive documents and resources for Colorado families going through a D&N court case. The Task Force is beginning to review how best to intervene but this project has support broadly from the full Task Force.

The CJA Task Force followed the structured CQI process in reviewing the work done over the last three years. During the study aspect of the CQI process, the CJA Task Force reviewed the current RFP awardees and the other projects awarded to ensure they were fulfilling the goals set forth by the CJA Task Force in 2018. Each of the awarded projects as compared to the five current goals of the CJA Task Force. The CJA Task Force found all of the funded projects meet at least one of the five goals.

An example of how the CJA Task Force reviews each RFP within the context of the five set goals was the performance review based on the challenges of COVID-19. The Task Force agreed to allow awardees to modify the scopes of work to ensure compliance with the desired goal achievement and the limits of face-to-face contact. The Task Force provided feedback to each awardee to ensure the outcomes were not going to be affected due to any modifications.

The work the CJA Task Force is doing is closely related to the APSR, the CFSR, and the PIP. This is evident in Goal 4, Strategies 2 and 3 in the PIP:

- Strategy 2: Counties and judicial partners will work together to reduce the delays in filing for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR).
- Strategy 3: Implement improved court of appeals processes and procedures at the local level (in PIP counties) to reduce the time between filing a notice of appeal and a decision on appeal, in order to achieve more timely adoption.

A number of CJA Task Force members are working on PIP committees to address these strategies and are currently on track to complete this goal within the timeframes set forth in the PIP.

In late 2020, during the evaluation of programs, it became clear there was a need to create information to provide to youth and families going through the D&N process. As the legal process is complicated and confusing, clear and easily digestible material in multiple languages was needed. A subgroup of the Task Force has taken on this task and will be moving forward in it over the next three years.

All CJA Task Force members were invited to review the 2022 APSR and provide feedback via email or teleconference. The CJA Task Force was also issued the 2020 APSR and a number of members are working on PIP subcommittees. It is this level of integration between the county and state staff alongside community providers, judicial partners, and families which CJA Task Force is most proud of.

Recommendations

The CJA Task Force agrees on the following recommendations:

1. Ensure that all professionals involved in the assessment, investigation, and judicial handling of child abuse and/or neglect throughout the State of Colorado are well-qualified by supporting:
 - a. The creation or replication of multi-disciplinary trainings;
 - b. Effective multi-disciplinary case review processes;
 - c. Multi-disciplinary consultations processes; and
 - d. Innovative programs that further partnerships, ensure the use of best-practice, and prevent the further occurrence of child abuse and/or neglect.
2. Ensure that all resources and trainings have the maximum impact through:
 - a. Improved accessibility of resources and training opportunities;
 - b. Extensive reach (geographically, diversity, and quantity of participants);
 - c. The use of clear performance outcomes;
 - d. Enhanced knowledge and skill transfer activities that support sustainability; and
 - e. Using current technology.
3. Ensure CJA-supported trainings do not duplicate other trainings available in Colorado.
4. Increase the dissemination and replication of effective models, programs, and trainings.
5. Improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and/or neglect cases, including child sexual abuse and exploitation through:
 - a. Implementation of evidence-based programs;
 - b. Ensuring well-trained and well-supported professionals (forensic interviewers, prosecutors, judicial officers, child welfare workers, etc.); and
 - c. Implementation of innovative and/or pilot programs.

The CJA Task Force agrees to continue following the five goals established in 2015 and these were reconfirmed in 2021. The CJA Task Force agrees these five goals are in alignment with the current APSR and PIP along with being in alignment with CAPTA legislation, specifically Section 107(e)(1)(A)(B)(C). The CJA Task Force will continue to review proposals through the RPF process and continue to be selective by only funding those proposals which meet at least one of these criteria and ensure they are aligned with other state and federal initiatives.

Part VI: Proposed Activities

The current RFP cycle ends on March 31, 2021, and thus, the CJA Task Force released available funds through an RFP process (see budget on page 20). The CJA Task Force has decided to align the timeframes to the state RFP cycle; therefore, the CJA Task Force agreed to extend the funding for all activities through September 30, 2021. The CJA Task Force is currently in the process of reopening the statewide RFP to solicit other activities and/or programs that meet the recommended criteria. The Task Force will begin offering this funding on October 1, 2021, as a five-year RFP.

In addition, the CJA Task Force will engage in the following activities to meet CJA Recommendations:

- **Alignment with the CFSP, APSR, and the results of the 2017 CFSR and the implementation of the federal PIP:** See description under prior year activities, as these activities continue through September of 2022. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and (C) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #3 and #4.*
- **D&N Resources for Youth and Families:** See description under prior year activities, as these activities continue through September of 2022. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(B) and (C) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #2, #4, and #5.*
- **Colorado Seminary/Butler Institute:** See description under prior year activities, as these activities continue through September of 2021. *This project aligned with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and Colorado CJA Recommendations #1, #2, #4, and #5.*
- **Court and Legal Representation Improvement Work:**
 - **Colorado CIP and Judicial Training Department:** See description under prior year activities, as these activities continue through September of 2022. *This project aligns with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #1, #2, and #3.*
 - **Colorado's OCR:** See description under prior year activities, as these activities continue through September of 2022. *This project aligns with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #4 and #5.*
 - **Colorado's ORPC:** See description under prior year activities as these activities continue through September of 2022. *This project aligns with CAPTA Section 107(e)(1)(A) and with Colorado CJA Recommendations #4 and #5.*

Ongoing Evaluation of Performance

For performance monitoring of the RFP grant sub-recipients, the CJA Task Force asks each sub-recipient to identify clear performance measures in their application for funds. In addition, the CJA Task Force requires the following reporting:

- Make at least one (1) annual presentation virtually or in-person to the CJA Task Force;
- Participate in one (1) annual site visit (as COVID-19 allows) with CJA Task Force members;
- Provide progress reports every six (6) months during the funding cycle;
- Demonstrate quality performance by providing timely reports which demonstrate improved outcomes and through communication with the CAPTA Administrator and the CJA Task Force;
- Submit regular invoices; and,

- Provide additional information, as requested, to assess performance. Methods used to assess performance will include a review of documentation reflective of performance, including status reports, meeting minutes, electronic data, and on-going fiscal monitoring.

Other CJA Task Force opportunities to support projects not funded through the RFP process, the CJA Task Force requires the following:

- Submission of quarterly progress reports;
- Make at least one (1) annual presentation virtually or in-person to the CJA Task Force;
- Demonstrate quality performance by providing timely reports which demonstrate improved outcomes and through communication with the CAPTA Administrator and the CJA Task Force;
- Demonstrate compliance with their agreement with the Task Force by providing timely reports and improvement in measurable outcomes;
- Submit regular invoices; and,
- Provide additional information as requested to assess performance. Methods used to assess performance will include a review of documentation reflective of performance, including status reports, meeting minutes, electronic data, and on-going fiscal monitoring.

Proposed FY22 Budget

Category	Description	Budget FFY21 October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022
Personnel	CDHS has a 100% Time and Effort Reporting policy to ensure that costs associated with a grant are accurately represented. Salary and Benefits costs are included for the following staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Program Assistant II (1.0 FTE) · Contracts and Grants Analyst (0.05 FTE) 	\$96,000
Travel	CJA Federal Grantees Meeting (2 representatives)	\$4,000
Operations	Supplies, Copying, Teleconferencing and Operations costs	\$500
Awarded via RFP 20-23	Support for multidisciplinary training and pilot projects designed to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect.	\$110,000
Other Activities	Support for linkages with the Colorado CIP, ORPC, OCR, training for prosecutors, and the Judicial Training Department	\$75,000
Indirect	CDHS uses an actual cost allocation model to bill indirect costs. Historically, these costs have represented approximately 7% of the awarded grant amount.	\$20,000
TOTAL		\$305,500.00

Part VII: Certification of Lobbying Form

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Michelle Barnes

May 28, 2021

Signature and Date

Michelle Barnes
Printed Name

Executive Director
Title
Colorado Department of Human Services
Organization