



Child Safety Forward: A National Initiative to Reduce Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities and Injuries Through a Collaborative, Community-Based Approach

Every day in the United States, an average of four to eight children will die at the hands of their caregivers from physical abuse or neglect. In its groundbreaking 2016 report, the U.S. Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities emphasized that fatalities are preventable and identified three fundamental components to improving our child welfare systems based on a public health approach: 1) leadership and accountability; 2) decisions grounded in better data and research; and 3) multidisciplinary support for families.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime is funding a demonstration initiative to develop multidisciplinary strategies and responses to address serious or near-death injuries as a result of child abuse or neglect and to reduce the number of child fatalities. The efforts will be responsive to the 21st Century Child Welfare System as envisioned by the Commission and will result in models for coordinated responses. Within Our Reach, an office at the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities supported by Casey Family Programs, will serve as the national technical assistance provider to the five demonstration sites.

The five sites are St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut; Cook County Health, Illinois; Indiana State Department of Health; Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; and Sacramento County's Child Abuse Prevention Council.

The technical assistance will be provided by a team of national experts utilizing expert-peer and peer-peer coaching. Technical assistance will support sites in improved data collection and analysis using a safety science approach, development of strong community collaboratives, engagement of persons with lived experiences, and developmental evaluation. This assistance is geared towards helping sites plan and implement an all-systems approach and coordinated strategic planning to respond to and reduce their child maltreatment fatalities and child crime victimization.

The technical assistance team will include Amy Templeman and Teri Covington, Within our Reach; Jennifer Jones, Change in Mind Institute; Laura Pineseault, Ph.D., Evaluation Plus; Dyann Daley, M.D., Predict-Align-Prevent; Robert Albright, MBA, FSG Collective Impact Forum; Michael Cull, Ph.D., University of Kentucky; Abby Collier, MS, National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention at the Michigan Public Health Institute; Teresa Rafael, MSW, and Meryl Levine, ACSW, MSSA, with the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds; and Jennifer Devlin, Tim Kobussen, and communications staff from the Alliance.

The major objectives of the technical assistance include:

- Establish learning exchange teams with the demonstration sites to share best practices and provide active TA to the sites as they develop and sustain effective local partnerships.
- Conduct data-driven needs assessments using new and old data from fatality review, analysis of deaths and injuries, community level socio-economic data, and other data on risk and protective factors.
- Provide TA and training as sites develop their strategic plans of action using a strong collective impact model of collaboration and evidence-based programming,
- Assist sites in developing regional and national communication strategies to share lessons learned and disseminate findings on outcomes and best practices.
- Participate in ongoing evaluation and integrate lessons learned to build upon successes.

For more information contact [Amy Templeman](#), director of the Within Our Reach Office.

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