

Arizona Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment

Annual Report



2021



The Governor's Office
of Youth, Faith
and Family



Council on Child
Safety and
Family Empowerment

goyff.AZ.gov/csfe



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

MARIA CRISTINA FUENTES
DIRECTOR

June 30, 2021

Governor Doug A. Ducey
State Capitol Executive Tower
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor,

It has been my pleasure to serve as chair of the Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment during these unprecedented times. I would like to acknowledge the phenomenal work of this Council, its members, task forces and work groups over the past year. Their expertise and passion to continue serving and supporting vulnerable communities across Arizona has made this work possible.

During this last year, the Council received presentations highlighting the tremendous efforts taking place across the state to pivot operations and meet the challenges created by COVID-19 and ensure we are best supporting Arizona's most vulnerable. Throughout the pandemic, the Council has continued to support the prevention of child abuse and neglect, adoption and foster care initiatives, and a continuum of services for those who need it most.

Thanks to the support of committed stakeholders, this Council has taken the lead, driving the Children's Justice State Task Force, assisting in the development of the State's three-year assessment, and establishing recommendations for the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

It is my hope that our continued efforts and collaborative partnerships concerning foster care and adoption, the prevention of child abuse and neglect, as well as ACEs and trauma informed care will improve and better serve our most vulnerable youth and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Ducey".

Angela Ducey, Chair
Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment

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COUNCIL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

Governor Doug Ducey established the Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment (CSFE) on July 13, 2015, through Executive Order 2015-08. This Council is administered by the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF). The Council was established on the premise that strong families and youth are the future of Arizona and are of vital importance to our communities and economy. To facilitate this vision, the Council works to align, leverage and coordinate faith-based and community resources to solve challenges faced by our state's vulnerable children and families.

Government plays an important role in providing supportive benefits, goods, and services, but that role is limited. This is why the Council works with both the private and public sectors to serve our communities. Through its work, the Council has broadened the network of support and services for Arizona's most vulnerable children and families by responding to community challenges and providing opportunities for development and growth.

On February 11, 2020, Governor Ducey signed Executive Order 2020-05, which supersedes the 2015-08 Executive Order. This new order added the Children's Justice State Task Force under the purview of the Child Safety and Family Empowerment Council. The Children's Justice Task Force assists in the development of the State's Three-Year Assessment and also makes recommendations for the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act/Children's Justice Act (CJA). This Task Force is required to have representation from a multitude of sectors, including: law enforcement, the judicial system, child advocates and child protection services.

In addition to holding five Council meetings a year, Council members also have the opportunity to serve on two workgroups and the Children's Justice Task Force. The groups meet regularly to address community needs and systemic challenges with the purpose of identifying best practices and providing evidence-based solutions. The Council accomplishes its work through the following groups:

CHILDREN'S JUSTICE TASK FORCE

The Children's Justice Task Force assists in the development of the State's Three-Year Assessment and also makes recommendations for the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act/Children's Justice Act (CJA).

PREVENTION

Seeks to address the underlying issues that contribute to a child being removed from a home and placed into foster care.

OUTREACH WORKGROUP

Connects with Arizona's faith-based communities and answers their question, "How can we serve?"

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-05, the Council is composed of individuals appointed by the Governor who serve at his pleasure without compensation. The following members currently serve on CSFE:

Angela Ducey, Chair
First Lady of Arizona

Berisha Black
Arizona Foster Care Initiatives

Kathryn Blades Ptak
Foster/Adoptive Parent

Kate Brophy McGee
Community Leader

Terry M. Crist
Hillsong Phoenix

Obed Escobar
Church Alliance

Michael Faust
AZ Department of Child Safety

Maria Cristina Fuentes
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family

Janet L. Garcia
Casey Family Programs

Dr. Lorrie Henderson
Jewish Family & Children's Service

Claire Louge
Prevent Child Abuse Arizona

Zora Manjencich
Attorney General's Office

Colleen McNally
Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, Retired

Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair
Adoption Attorney

James D. Molina
Step Up Arizona

Paul S. Mulligan
Catholic Charities

Darlene Newsom
Community Volunteer

Katie O'Dell
AZ 1.27

Leslie Y. Reprogle
Agape Adoption Agency of
Arizona

Brad Snyder
New Amsterdam Consulting

Warren H. Stewart
First Institutional Baptist Church

Jeff Taylor
Salvation Army Advisory Board

Torrie Taj
Child Crisis Arizona

Mark Upton
Christian Family Care

Ginger Ward
Southwest Human Development

Richard Yarbough
Pilgrim Rest Foundation

COUNCIL GOALS, 2020/21

The CSFE Council is a public-private partnership created to support Arizona's children and families. The Council was created to align, leverage, and coordinate faith-based and community resources to address challenges faced by vulnerable children and families within the child welfare system. The Council also works to provide additional support to strengthen families that are caring for both foster and adopted children.

The Council continues to focus its efforts on reducing and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to keep children from entering the foster care system. The Council has heard from issue-area experts on topics related to ACEs, trauma-informed care (TIC), and the prevention of childhood abuse and neglect. This information has driven the Council's efforts to ensure that ACEs prevention and trauma-informed care become the standard for supporting children across Arizona.

Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACEs

The prosperity and success of our state depends on the healthy development of children. However, when ACEs happen, this healthy development is disrupted, leading to a greater risk of negative lifelong health and social consequences.

Research shows that as the number of ACEs rises, risk factors for negative life outcomes increase, making children more susceptible to negative mental, behavioral, and physical health problems, including: opioid abuse, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, suicidal thoughts and criminal behavior. ACEs diminish the likelihood for success in school and the workplace. Children in foster care, and those at risk of entering foster care, are especially vulnerable to ACEs.

Preventing and reducing ACEs is critical to the success and well-being of Arizona children and we are grateful for Governor Ducey's leadership as we continue working to raise the standard of care and support services that we provide to Arizona's youth and families to help mitigate the impact of ACEs. Together, we can make Arizona a healthier, safer and stronger state for all.

Trauma-Informed Care - TIC

Arizona is committed to ensuring TIC becomes the standard for supporting children and families across Arizona. Through continued efforts and collaborative partnerships, Arizona is working to improve and better serve our most vulnerable youth and families through a trauma-informed lens.

TIC involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of trauma on an individual throughout their lifespan. TIC emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional support for individuals and works to help trauma survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

This Council, its workgroups and its council members are working diligently within their individual organizations to support services that combat childhood trauma, neglect and abuse. This Council is composed of policy-makers, advocates, service organizations, various government officials and faith community members who strive to make changes and offer support to Arizona's most vulnerable, and those who care for them, by reaching out to the community, listening to their needs and working on developing projects that are responsive to those needs.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES, 2020/21

7th Annual Statewide ACEs Summit

First Lady Angela Ducey and the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family Director Maria Cristina Fuentes joined over 600 national, regional and local leaders in December 2020 for the 7th Annual Arizona ACEs Summit, an event focused on promoting trauma-informed care to best treat those who have experienced ACEs.

The 2020 Summit was held virtually and in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse Arizona's 26th Statewide Child Abuse Prevention Conference. The Summit offered participants the opportunity to hear reports from state agencies on trauma-informed initiatives, learn more about the level of engagement community providers can expect moving forward, and identify opportunities to support this work. Keynote speakers included: Dr. Melissa Merrick, CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, who spoke on the power of prevention; Dr. Bob Sege, who spoke on Positive Childhood Experiences and the HOPE Framework; Dr. Monique Morris, who spoke on Responding to Trauma Impacting Black and Brown Girls; and Rick Griffin, who spoke on the power of relationships.

The 2020 Summit, themed "Connection: The Power of Relationships", focused on building and strengthening relationships to create the world we want for children. The Summit provided attendees the opportunity to participate in workshops led by national and state experts who have been instrumental in shaping Arizona's current trauma-informed care practices. Attendees also had the opportunity to share and discuss efforts to build upon current successes to continue improving Arizona's response to ACEs and trauma.

Arizona remains committed to reducing the number of citizens who experience ACEs by providing the support necessary to create happier and healthier communities statewide. State agencies, including Arizona's Department of Health Services and the Arizona Department of Child Safety, have partnered to reduce and mitigate the impact of ACEs through trauma-informed care and worked closely together to support the planning of the 7th annual ACEs Summit.

National Adoption Day

The Maricopa County National Adoption Day (Foundation) Celebration Committee hosted National Adoption Day on the third weekend of November to support all adopted children being in their permanent home for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The first National Adoption Day in Maricopa County was held on November 18, 2000, in Phoenix. That day, 59 children were adopted. Since then, more than 4,000 children have been adopted through these celebrations. This event has become the largest in the country - with more adoptions being completed than any other city in the nation. In 2020, the event pivoted to a virtual platform to ensure safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon, chair of the Foundation, shared her gratitude for the partners that have helped over the years to make the event a success, including the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and Governor Doug Ducey for issuing the National Adoption Month proclamation.

COUNCIL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

During the past year, the Council received presentations from issue-area experts on topics related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma-informed care, and the prevention of childhood abuse and neglect. The Council continued to learn and implement strategies to prevent ACEs in our community by assuring safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments. This understanding has helped facilitate the Council's efforts to ensure that trauma-informed care and the prevention of ACEs become the standard for supporting children and families across Arizona. These presentations included:

Arizona School Update

Katilin Harrier

Governor Ducey announced a one-time investment in K-12 education from federal CARES Act dollars. A total of \$370 million was invested to provide critical support to districts and charter schools to ensure budget stability and provide funding when students are learning in the traditional classroom setting, recognizing the additional costs in-person learning will bring to districts in the 2020/2021 school year.

Arizona Youth Empowerment Council

Ryan Young and Faith Sexton

Arizona Youth Empowerment Council's (YEC) mission is to improve the experience of foster care for youth and is a concerted effort by the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) to establish an authentic Youth/Adult partnership. In the last year, the ten members of YEC developed a presentation for youth in group homes explaining the foster care bill of rights, ways to self-advocate, and the roles and responsibilities of staff required by group home contracts. Goals for 2020/2021 include working with DCS's Executive team to compile ways the Council can work collaboratively to find solutions and to stay in contact with peers through multiple mediums.

CarePortal

Jonathan Sanborn

One hundred and twenty-seven churches within Arizona partner with CarePortal, serving as a Christian platform that provides churches with resources and empowerment to help needy families and children. Over 7,800 Arizona children have been impacted by CarePortal's services, with over 71,300 children served throughout the US.

Collective Impact for Child Safety and Well Being

Cassie Breecher and Dr. Meghan Vasquez

Collective Impact is a collaboration between public and private entities supported by Casey Family Programs and GOYFF. The goal of Collective Impact is to reduce the number of children entering the child welfare system with a primary prevention focus of supporting families in Arizona before they come to the attention of the Department of Child Safety. Arizona is ripe for collective impact work, specifically focused on child safety and well-being.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Nora Briggs

The Dollywood Foundation was created by Dolly Parton in 1988 and inspired by her father. The mission of the foundation is "simply to inspire a love of books and reading." The flagship program of the foundation is the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The library is designed as a grassroots community-by-community book gifting program that mails high-quality,

age-appropriate books to children from birth until age five, free to the family, no matter their income. Since starting in 1995, the Imagination Library has gifted more than 159 million books and 1.8 million children receive a book monthly in five countries. Because of the work the Imagination Library has done, the foundation was awarded the Best Practice Award from the U.S. Library of Congress for addressing social barriers to literacy.

Children participating in the Imagination Library have significantly stronger reading skills and scored higher on reading achievement tests consistently from Kindergarten through Third Grade. In Arizona, 2.5% (10,819) of children aged zero to five were enrolled in the program with 39 affiliates across the state.

Indian Child Welfare Act in Arizona

Jack Trope

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was enacted in 1978 to recognize tribal sovereignty and the important role tribes have in protecting the well-being of tribal children. This was in direct response to problems in state child-welfare systems and curtailed, but did not eliminate, state authority. ICWA adds federal standards to state child-welfare law, but does not replace state law, except where state law is inconsistent with ICWA.

ICWA principles aim to be a gold standard for child welfare: keep children with their family, and, when that is not possible, this means keeping children with their relatives, and keeping them connected with their culture and community. At the time of the presentation, there was a shortage of tribal foster homes in all states which has generated an emphasis on extended family placements. Pima County has the only ICWA Court operating in Arizona. This court works primarily with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and Tohono O’odham Nation. These courts have a centralized ICWA docket and trained judges, attorneys, and social workers in the spirit and letter of law.

National Adoption Month

Director Maria Fuentes and Katie O’Dell

GOYFF partnered with the Council, the LoveUp Foundation, Arizona Department of Child Safety, and other partners in the faith community to raise the profile of National Adoption Month during the COVID-19 Pandemic. A webinar was created and shared, aimed at increasing the level of participation from the faith community in support of AZ 1.27.

AZ 1.27 is a collaboration of faith community members that strives to mobilize church communities by helping to create ministries within churches and provide pastors/church leaders with the resources they need to succeed. AZ 1.27’s approach to mobilization is three-pronged: recruit members while equipping them with resources, offer trauma-informed classes and training, and focus on biological family restoration. Services shifted to an online platform in response to COVID-19, in order to continue supporting the work of the churches despite the circumstances presented by the pandemic.

Maricopa County Juvenile Court

Judge Joseph Kreamer and Judge Pamela Svoboda

In the Juvenile Court, all business of the court shifted remotely to minimize unnecessary exposure to COVID-19. Unlike other juvenile courts around the country that have paused their operations, the Maricopa County Juvenile Court did not miss a beat. The Superior Court engaged in a partnership called CourtConnect with Microsoft Teams to better handle hearings and proceedings in a virtual setting. This allowed attorneys and clients to break out into virtual rooms

to discuss matters privately. Prior to the pandemic, around 13,000 employees were going onsite to perform their work functions. That number was reduced to approximately 1,000. Judge Kreamer and Judge Svoboda shared the courts' intentions to have some proceedings conducted in-person and eventually phase-in a return to the courts.

Prevent Child Abuse Arizona

Claire Louge

Prevent Child Abuse Arizona (PCAA) is working to create robust prevention systems in Arizona and respond to Arizona's needs to ensure we are harnessing the state's strengths to support Arizona's children. Two programs were outlined during PCAA's presentation, the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and Lean on Me Arizona. Triple P supports parent self-regulation and coping skills. The program focuses on understanding parent emotions and reactions and helps develop coping skills as a strategy to manage troubled child behaviors. Lean on Me AZ provides tips and ideas for creating a culture of parent support. The program aims to normalize the fact that parenting can be stressful, and works to establish help-seeking behavior, and expand tools for agencies outside of the hotlines.

Reunification Day

Colleen McNally

The 2021 Family Reunification Day event in Maricopa County was held remotely on June 12th. Each of the honorees had significant challenges that led to their children being removed from their care and placed in the child welfare system. Thanks to perseverance and partnership, these families were successful in resolving their issues and regained custody of their children prior to being nominated for recognition by either child welfare staff, attorneys, counselors, CASAs or parent allies. Pre-event activities included professional portrait opportunities, gift bags, and certificates. For the virtual event, invitations were extended to all families involved and each family was acknowledged during this special event. Maricopa County honored 25 families with 65 children for 2020 and 2021.

Sesame Streets In Communities

Jasmin Williams

Sesame Street Workshop, in addition to being an iconic television show, is a nonprofit organization with a mission to help children grow smarter, stronger and kinder, reaching more than 150 countries. Sesame Street has three focused social impact programs within the US: Sesame Street and Autism, Sesame Street for Military Families, and Sesame Street in Communities (SSIC). SSIC reaches vulnerable children and families through an online resource content hub, professional development tools and implementation with national and community partners. SSIC is currently in 12 communities throughout the United States, including Maricopa County. In Maricopa County, SSIC partners with the Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Recovers, First Things First, and the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family.

Unique Health Needs of Trafficked Youth

Dr. Sarah Beaumont

On average it is estimated that 4.2 million youth and young adults experience homelessness each year. This number is alarming, as about one-third of the adolescents living on the street are recruited for sexual exploitation within 48 hours of becoming homeless. About 88% of trafficked youth victims come into contact with a medical professional while being trafficked.

Few are reported due to the lack of education, training of providers and staff, and patients not self-identifying. If not properly reported, the youth may miss out on the care that they need for

their physical and mental well-being. Trafficked youth are in need of trained medical professionals and staff that can identify the signs of trafficking, provide trauma-informed care, and increased access and availability of mental health resources.

Youth Experiences Survey

Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

The Youth Experiences Survey (YES) is a study of the experiences of homeless young adults in Arizona that has been conducted for the past seven years. The YES survey focuses on how the life experiences of Arizona's homeless young adults (ages 18-25) increases their risk for experiencing human trafficking and helps determine gaps in service needs for this particularly vulnerable population and explore the prevalence of sex and labor exploitation as a result of these vulnerabilities.

The past year has presented its own unique challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic created additional barriers to providing critical services to vulnerable clients. Despite a 48.5% decrease in sample size from the 2019 YES Survey, the findings from the 2020 YES Survey remain consistent across the past 7 years when it come to identifying the most critical vulnerabilities to the sex trafficked and labor exploited homeless young adults in the state of Arizona: self-harm, attempted suicide, history of abuse, PTSD, drug use and experiencing four or more ACE's.

STATE AGENCY UPDATES

Department of Child Safety

Director Michael Faust

The Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) works to engage Arizona children and families to ensure safety, strengthen families, and achieve permanency, creating family environments free from abuse and neglect for children to thrive. Director Faust continues to provide on-going updates on the activities of DCS at each of the CSFE meetings. These updates included highlights of the progress DCS has made with its data, staffing and overall impact on children and families.

DCS continues to work to find permanency for children and families, despite transitioning some operations virtually at the beginning of the pandemic. Over the past year, the agency has worked to ensure ongoing investigations and in person visits. While some state child welfare agencies stopped investigating abuse during the pandemic, DCS continued to investigate every call of abuse and neglect, responding to roughly 150 reports a day. They conduct approximately 6,000 in-person visits per week throughout the state. In addition, over 3,000 families have been reunified and around 1,800 children have been adopted since March 2020.

Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family

Director Maria Fuentes

The Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF) is a cabinet level agency that administers state and federal grant programs and engages stakeholders across all sectors throughout the state to improve services and service delivery to citizens. GOYFF continues to focus on prevention and trauma-informed care across its focus areas, including: Child Well-Being, Human Trafficking, Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention, Faith-based Initiatives, Domestic & Sexual Violence, Aging, Substance Abuse Prevention, Service & Volunteerism and the Governor's Youth Commission.

GOYFF distributes state and federal funds each year. Public and private sector organizations that address one or more of the issues identified by GOYFF can apply for these funds. Grants are then awarded through a formal application process. GOYFF continues to fund trauma-informed services to better support Arizona’s children and families through the following:

- Substance Abuse Prevention Grants: Arizona Parents Commission on Drug Education & Prevention (Annual Investment: \$5,534,311), State Opioid Response Grant (Annual Investment: \$4,153,216), Substance Abuse Block Grant (Annual Investment: \$5.9 million), Partnership for Success Grant Annual Investment (Annual Investment: \$2,521,250)
- Juvenile Justice and Child Safety Grants: Title II Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grant (Annual Investment: \$1,138,763) and Children’s Justice Grant- The Children’s Justice Act (Annual Investment: \$364,731)
- Early Childhood and Mental Health Grants: Childcare and Development Funds (CCDF) (Annual Investment: \$245,000), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) STOP School Violence Grant Program (Annual Investment: \$334,000)
- Child Abuse Prevention and Advocacy License Plate (Annual Investment \$375,000)
- Sexual and Domestic Violence Grants: Sexual Assault Service Program Grant (Annual Investment: \$477,085), STOP Grant (Annual Investment \$3,700,000)

COUNCIL SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

It is the privilege of the Council to recognize extraordinary contributions made by individuals, families, organizations and congregations that work to provide safety and well-being for Arizona’s most vulnerable populations. This report highlights the nominees who were selected and celebrated during 2020/2021. The Council would also like to acknowledge and extend its gratitude for every person, family, and organization that fights for the future of Arizona’s children and families.



Bahney Dedolph and the Arizona Council of Human Service Providers

Bahney Dedolph, Candi Espino, Linda Scott and other leaders of the Arizona Council of Human Service Providers (ACHSP) have assisted the Arizona Department of Child Safety in developing policies and guidance during COVID-19 focused on the safety of children and families, all while making sure critical services continue to be provided to families in need.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, ACHSP worked closely with DCS, providing critical feedback on In-Person Guidelines for Child Contacts & Parenting Time (Visitation), advocating on behalf of families and child welfare providers to continue receiving services in a safe manner and engaging with providers on weekly calls to provide updates on COVID related issues.

Bahney’s commitment to the success of Arizona’s child welfare system is relentless. Bahney is a true advocate for children and families and has worked tirelessly to ensure they are receiving critical support during this time. Through this partnership they have collaborated to ensure permanency outcomes are still achieved and Arizona's children and families are served during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emily Horos

Emily Horos has been licensed to provide foster care in Arizona since December 2019. During this short time, Emily has proven to be an exceptional example of positive shared parenting.

With each of the seven foster care children that have come into her home, she has supported communication with the biological families, sharing updates regarding the children, and assisting with transportation.

Emily has three children in her home and continues to participate in positive shared parenting. She provides consistent and regular updates, helps to facilitate virtual visits for the parents during doctor appointments, and has recently begun helping with transportation. Emily is a wonderful advocate for ensuring the children in her care have appropriate services in place, and she goes above and beyond to ensure that the biological parents understand the child's current conditions, services, and needs.

Emily's passion for ensuring the children entrusted to her care are raised in safe, stable and nurturing homes continues to leave an impact and serve as an example of what one person can do to make a difference in the lives of many.



Katie O'Dell

Katie O'Dell serves as the Executive Director of Arizona 1.27. Arizona 1.27 is a statewide movement of churches working together to serve kids and families connected to the Arizona foster care system with the belief that children need families and families need the community to thrive. Arizona 1:27 acts as a bridge organization to help churches engage in meaningful, holistic ways to impact the lives of children in foster care. Katie has served on Hillsong church staff for more than 15 years as the Director of Community and Global Initiatives. She also serves as the Executive Director of FosterCare Initiatives, an organization that recruits and trains individuals, churches and nonprofits to engage in the Foster and Adoption process.

Becky Ruffner

During her time as Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Arizona (PCA Arizona), Becky supported children in Arizona with an intense passion to ensure our children are raised in safe, stable, and nurturing homes. Under Becky's leadership, PCA Arizona has worked tirelessly to change societal conditions that lead to abuse and neglect so that children can thrive in their families and communities. Since its founding, PCA Arizona has been a leader in bringing research-based prevention services to communities throughout the state. Each year, their prevention services reach more than 60,000 young children and families through parent education, home visits and child welfare system improvements.

Becky has been recognized nationally for her years of advocacy on behalf of Arizona children. Her numerous accolades include Nonprofit Executive of the Year in 2019 through the Arizona Business Angel



Awards, The Arizona Bar Association's Terry Chandler Award, Prevent Child Abuse America's Leadership in Action Award, and Champion for Children Award through Children's Action Alliance.

While Becky retired in December 2019, her vision and determination continue to shape child welfare in Arizona. Becky's passion for ensuring all Arizona's children are raised in safe, stable and nurturing homes continues to leave a legacy of strength and determination throughout our state.



Pastor Brian and Mrs. Skye Steele

Brian and Skye have served together in international and domestic missions for nearly 10 years, and served in the inner-city, ministry social services field for over 15 years. During their time at the Phoenix Dream Center they have directly driven the creation and implementation of four different transitional housing programs, including the Trauma Informed Sex Trafficking Program, Family Systems Emergency Family Program and the Age Out Foster Care Programs. They have also created numerous community based outreaches, including Youth and Sex Trafficking Prevention Outreaches to Teen Girls, as well as greatly increased community and church support of the vision and mission of the Phoenix Dream Center.

Skye now serves as the Chief Executive Officer of StreetLightUSA, a collaborative partner organization with the Phoenix Dream Center specializing in Trauma-Informed and Behavioral Health Services to child victims of human trafficking.

COUNCIL WORKGROUP REPORTS

Three workgroups regularly convene to support the goals of the Council. Accomplishments within fiscal year 2020/21 include:

- Completion of a state-wide assessment and development of recommendations for the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
- Restructuring the prevention workgroup to support the changing needs of parents and care providers to recognize and support the needs of parents and children to reduce ACE's
- Identifying high-risk, vulnerable communities to identify gaps in services and to inform, educate and improve the rate of children going into out-of-home placements

Children's Justice (CJ) Taskforce

The Children's Justice Task Force assists in the development of the State's Three-Year Assessment and also makes recommendations for the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act/Children's Justice Act (CJA). The final analysis of the Taskforce survey demonstrated an overwhelming need for training and identified opportunities to provide the most effective training possible to the state.

Prevention Workgroup

In light of the prevention presentations shared during Council meetings, and a mutual desire to more closely align the efforts of this workgroup with the goals of the Council - the prevention workgroup leadership and membership was revised in 2021 to align with ongoing work to prevent child abuse and neglect at both the state and national level. Through this shift, a new workgroup structure was developed to best position members to engage in and support prevention efforts statewide. Claire Louge, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Arizona, now serves as the workgroup chair and the Council looks forward to hearing more about workgroup outcomes in the coming year.

This year, in partnership with GOYFF, the workgroup had the opportunity to engage and support prevention efforts through the Speak Up, Stand Up, Save A Life Conference. The annual conference, now in its fifth year, has encouraged 21 cities, 54 school districts, and 420,000 students, to be aware of warning signs around depression, suicide, grief, abuse and bullying, and how to speak up to a trusted adult. By doing such, individuals learn the first step to saving a life and creating life-lasting solutions on how to Speak Up, Stand Up, and Save A Life.

Outreach Workgroup

The Outreach Workgroup, chaired by Katie O'Dell, engages with Arizona's faith-based communities to learn how communities of faith can best serve and support children and families impacted by the child welfare system. Through an increased awareness and understanding of ACEs among the faith-based community, and the importance of using appropriate trauma-informed programs and strategies designed to mitigate the impact of ACEs on a child's future, faith-based partners are answering the call.

Arizona's communities of faith have been instrumental in supporting children and families, and our state continues to benefit from the care and concern being expressed. In 2020, the workgroup partnered with GOYFF, DCS, and the LoveUp Foundation to share more about how the faith community can amplify its support and service of Arizona parents and children to ensure our communities thrive.