The California Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
Strengthening Practice Through Knowledge

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Zealously Protecting the Youngest Crime Victims:

Safeguarding Child Victims' Rights

by Kathy Cady

All children deserve a childhood free from abuse and trauma. When children have been physically or sexually assaulted, it is important for everyone helping them to minimize any additional trauma. Investigating child abuse (1) requires a coordinated effort to keep children safe, hold offenders accountable, and zealously protect the youngest crime victims when they must participate in the criminal justice system.

Our society mandates many ways to protect children, including child restraints in vehicles (2), movie and music ratings (3), and setting a legal age at which people can drink alcohol.(4) Children who are involved in the criminal justice system have most likely been exposed to violence and/or sex and are now being asked to talk about it in a courtroom full of strangers. Protecting child victims from further trauma starts with safeguarding child victims' rights. This remains the core principle for professionals who investigate and prosecute these crimes.

Core Principles

Pursuant to article I, section 28(b)(1) of the California Constitution: All victims, including children, are entitled "[t]o be treated with fairness and respect in regards to privacy and dignity, and to be free from intimidation, harassment, and abuse throughout the criminal or

juvenile justice process." Per Penal Code section 679, victims' rights are to be "honored and protected by law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges in a manner no less vigorous than the protections afforded criminal defendants." A prosecutor, upon request of the victim, may enforce a victim's rights. (5) A coordinated approach to cases involving child victims and witnesses benefits children and minimizes their trauma, holds offenders accountable, and helps protect society. (6) Peace officers, prosecutors, and judges are charged with considering the needs of the child victim/witness and doing whatever is necessary to prevent any additional psychological harm. This includes any damage that might result from participating in the child abuse investigation or court process. (7)

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study highlights why it is so critical that those who work in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse do all they can to prevent additional trauma brought on by the child participating in the criminal justice system. (8) The ACE Study illustrates how child abuse can have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and lifelong health and opportunity. The impact of exposure to abuse in childhood on adult health is strong and cumulative. Children who have had adverse childhood experiences have negative impairment in social, emotional, and cognitive development; increased health risk behaviors such as smoking and drug use; increased risk for disease, disability, and other social problems; and a lower life expectancy. (9)

Children should not be re-traumatized by well-meaning agencies and individuals charged with protecting them. Working with well-established multidisciplinary teams to investigate these crimes and using all tools available to help support children through the criminal justice process minimizes trauma and leads to results where the child's voice is honored and respected.

Safeguarding and Protecting Children Who Participate in the Criminal Justice System

Testifying can be hard for anyone, but for a child, it may be especially difficult. Because of this difficulty, the law allows many accommodations to protect a child's identity; shield the child from any trauma, coercion, intimidation, or undue influence; and provide the child with comfort and support during the court process.

Courts must carefully balance the constitutional rights of both the defendant and the victim. The remedy for violating a defendant's constitutional rights is a new trial. There are no consequences for violating a victim's constitutional rights.

A Child's Right to Privacy and Confidentiality

Child victims have a right to be treated with "respect for his or her privacy and dignity." They also have a right "to prevent the disclosure of confidential information." (10) Documents can be easily disseminated via the Internet and once they are, it is almost

impossible to delete or eliminate them from the public domain. Therefore, it is critical to keep these obligations in mind at the earliest stages of proceedings and throughout the criminal justice process to ensure that a victim's rights are honored and protected. Protecting a child's privacy can be accomplished through:

- **Anonymity**—Pursuant to Government Code section 6254(f)(2)(A), the name of any victim identified in sexual offense crimes "may be withheld at the victim's request, or at the request of the victim's parent or guardian if the victim is a minor." (11)
- **Closed Courtroom**—Pursuant to Penal Code section 859.1(a), the court has authority to close the courtroom in cases involving a child under the age of 16 years who is a victim of sexual assault or physical abuse to protect the child's reputation.
- **Protective Orders/Requests to Seal Records**—Prosecutors can request protective orders to seal sensitive information such as photos that depict injuries, photos of genital or other private areas taken during a SART exam, medical records, financial records, school records, diaries, psychological records, or cell phone records from public disclosure. (12)

A Child's Right to be Reasonably Protected and Free from Intimidation

Child victims have a right "to be free from intimidation, harassment, and abuse throughout the criminal or juvenile justice process." Pursuant to article, I, section 28(b)(2) of the Constitution, they also have a right "[t]o be reasonably protected from the defendant and persons acting on behalf of the defendant." In addition, section 28(b)(3) gives child victims a right to have their "safety considered in fixing the amount of bail and release conditions for the defendant."

Victims can register to be notified when a defendant is released from custody through the Victim Inmate Notification Everyday (VINE) system. (13)

A Child's Right to Be Protected

While the case is pending, the court may issue a criminal protective order protecting any victim of a violent crime. (14) If the case involves child abuse by a parent, "the court on its own motion shall consider issuing a protective order upon good cause belief that harm to, or intimidation or dissuasion, … is reasonably likely to occur." (15)

- **Closed Courtroom**—Pursuant to Penal Code section 868.7(a)(2), the prosecutor can motion the court to close the courtroom in cases involving any witness "[w]hose life would be subject to substantial risk in appearing before the general public" when no alternative security measures are available.
- **Ensure Victims are Not Intimidated**—Pursuant to Penal Code section 686.2: "The court may … order the removal of any spectator who is intimidating a witness."

A Child's Right to Participate in the Criminal Justice System

Per article I, section 28(b)(6)–(8) of the Constitution, child victims have a right to notice of court hearings, be present in court, and be heard. Victims who do not speak English cannot meaningfully understand what is happening in court to know whether their rights are at issue, or if they want to be heard, unless they understand the proceedings. Prosecutors should consider asking for an interpreter to assist non-English speaking child victims. All victims (so they can effectively participate and be heard) should be entitled to an interpreter.

Note: Child victims have a right to be informed of any pre-trial disposition and "reasonably confer" with the prosecuting agency. (16)

Legal Accommodations to Support Children Through the Criminal Justice System

Prioritizing Child Abuse Cases

Child abuse cases have legal priority over all other criminal actions per Penal Code section 1048(b)(1). All criminal actions in which a minor is the victim of the alleged offense shall be given precedence over all other criminal actions in the order of trial. Continuances will be granted only after a hearing. A trial shall be commenced within 30 days after arraignment unless good cause can be shown. At the preliminary hearing, however, prosecutors may elect to not request priority so that the courtroom is cleared out if the child must testify.

Postponing a Preliminary Hearing

Pursuant to Penal Code section 861.5: "[T]he magistrate may postpone the preliminary examination for one court day in order to accommodate special physical, mental, or emotional needs of a child witness who is 10 years of age or younger."

Closing the Courtroom

The court shall conduct a hearing to determine whether testimony before the general public would be likely to cause serious psychological harm to the victim when no alternative procedures are available. (17)

Preserving Testimony via Videotape

Pursuant to Penal Code section 1346(a), if the victim is 15 years old or younger, "the People may apply for an order that the victim's testimony at the preliminary hearing, … be

video recorded … [and] preserved." The order must be in writing and made three days in advance of the hearing. Section 1346(d) states: "If at time of trial the court finds that further testimony would cause the victim emotional trauma so that the victim is medically unavailable … the court may admit the video recording of the victim's testimony …."

Testifying on Closed-Circuit Television

In cases where the child is a victim of sexual assault or physical abuse, or a witness to a violent felony, the judge may order closed-circuit television testimony of the child after the judge holds a hearing and makes a finding that testifying in the presence of the defendant would result in serious emotional distress to the child and all of the following conditions exist:

- The defendant used a weapon.
- The defendant inflicted great bodily injury.
- The defendant threatened the child or family.
- The defendant behaved in a way during the hearing to cause the child to be unable to continue. (18)

The prosecutor must give three days' written notice before the hearing.

Modifying Court Proceedings

In cases where the defendant is charged with sexual assault or child abuse, and the child is under 11 years old, the judge can modify court proceedings and make reasonable accommodations to ensure that victims are able to participate effectively in criminal proceedings. For example, witnesses may be allowed reasonable breaks, and the judge can remove his/her robe or limit testimony to normal school hours. (19)

Modifying the Oath to Tell the Truth for Children Under Age 10

A child under age 10, in the court's discretion, may be required only to promise to tell the truth. (20)

Allowing Two Support Persons and/or a Support Dog

A victim of child abuse or sexual assault is entitled to two support persons, one of whom may be a witness. In addition to general provisions regarding support persons, a child victim has the right to a support person during grand jury testimony in cases involving child abuse or sexual assault. (21)

Penal Code section 868.4 allows a therapy or facility dog to accompany a child witness testifying about a serious or violent crime. The section also allows any victim to have a therapy or facility dog if that person is entitled to have a support person. The court has the ultimate discretion to allow the therapy or facility dog to accompany the witness. (22)

Dogs empower victims, provide emotional support, and introduce a loving and non-judgmental presence into the judicial process. There is a body of scientific documentation that dogs are the one animal who impact our blood pressure and other health indicators in a positive way. (23)

Instructing the Jury

Pursuant to Penal Code section 1127f, the jury "should not discount or distrust testimony of a child solely because he or she is a child." (24)

Referring Children for Victim Services

All child victims should be referred for services to the county's Victim-Witness Assistance Program advocates. (25) In addition to helping victims heal, referring victims for these services also helps in the criminal prosecution. Victims may be distracted by emotional issues, stress, monetary problems, childcare issues and/or exhausted because of a lack of sleep, fear of retaliation, lack of familiarity with the court and the system, and/or anger. Advocates can provide resources and referrals to victims to help them concentrate and be less distracted, which enables them to be better witnesses in your case.

All victim services programs share a common mandate: To provide comprehensive victim services and advocacy to "reduce the trauma and insensitive treatment that victims and witnesses may experience in the wake of a crime, since all too often citizens who become involved with the criminal justice system, either as victims and witnesses to crime, are further victimized by that system." (26)

Victim-Witness Assistance Programs assist with lessening the emotional trauma, financial losses and devastating impact of crime on the lives of victims, witnesses, and their families. Advocates provide mandatory services to victims of crimes of violence, including children. (27) These services are provided for felony and misdemeanor crimes and for cases which are filed or not filed. There is no legal residency requirement for receiving services.

Notifying Victims of Their Right to Civil Recovery (28)

Advocates also assist victims of violent crimes in applying to the California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) for reimbursement of crime-related losses. Victims who

have suffered physical or emotional injury or threat of injury during a crime are eligible to apply whether or not a suspect is identified, or a criminal case is filed. (29)

Preparing Children for Court

Children experience trauma when they are asked to recount abuse that they have personally experienced or witnessed. The Judicial Council of California offers the following guidance to bench officers:

> Responsible persons should provide potential child witnesses with *age-appropriate* preparation before the child testifies. Children's knowledge of and experience with the legal system is limited; replete with misconceptions or unrealistic fears. Coping with the demands of the system is challenging for adults, but even more so for children who are still developing the necessary cognitive, communicative, and emotional abilities to cope with confusion and distress, at the same time as they are called upon to provide reliable information under formidable circumstances. Children's lack of understanding of the system is a potential source of court-related stress. Child witnesses express unrealistic fears of being punished, put in jail, or being on trial themselves that might be allayed by preparation. More knowledgeable child witnesses are less distressed about attending hearings and may provide better testimony.
>
> Where ["Kids in Court"] programs exist, judicial officers should require that children attend these programs before testifying. Where such programs do not exist, courts should consider taking the lead to start them. Programs can be conducted under the auspices of courts, child advocacy centers, or independent community groups. Typically, the facts of the child's case are never discussed with the child to avoid contamination. Instead, interventions focus on demystifying the legal process and the roles of the various participants, anxiety reduction strategies, a tour of a courtroom, and general instructions about answering questions (e.g., giving children permission to say "I don't know" when children lack knowledge). (30)

Rady Children's Health Services in San Diego has been providing a "Kids and Teens in Court" (KTIC) program for 20 years and assists approximately 200 children/teens a year. (31) It is run through the hospital and includes participation from prosecutors, bailiffs, judges, and advocates.

> [KTIC] helps children, teenagers, and their caregivers who are not suspected of abuse learn how the court and possible trial works. Program goals for the children and teenagers include reducing their stress and anxiety; improving their coping skills by teaching them to manage their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and making it possible for them to effectively testify in court and gain control of the

> court experience. Program goals for these caretakers include increasing caregiver coping skills, and allowing the adults to manage their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in order to fully support their child or teen through the court process and recovery. (32)

The program has been designed to withstand scrutiny of the courts and defense counsel. KTIC recommends that the curriculum be delivered by well-trained facilitators. In addition, KTIC stresses that it is important for facilitators to not jeopardize a child's case because of inappropriate court preparation.

Protecting Child Victims' Rights After Conviction

All victims, including children, have a right to make a victim impact statement at sentencing. (33) This allows the victim an opportunity to regain control, find his or her voice, and tell the defendant how the crime(s) affected him or her.

Child victims have a right to restitution and the prompt return of property. (34) Prosecutors are encouraged to keep the ACE Study (previously referenced) in mind when seeking restitution for future loss. Courts may order non-economic losses, including, but not limited to, psychological harm for victims of child molestation. (35)

The judge may also issue a criminal protection order protecting the child for up to 10 years, regardless of whether the defendant is sentenced to prison, probation, or mandatory supervision. (36)

All victims, including children, have a right to be notified of parole procedures, participate in the parole process, be notified of any release, and to have their safety considered before any parole decision is made. (37) The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) provides victim services and has a form that victims can fill out to ensure that their rights are protected and they receive notification. This form also allows victims to receive notification and information on any appellate hearings from the Attorney General's Office. (38)

Conclusion

The criminal justice system was not developed with children in mind. Being a victim is not an experience any person wants to go through, and for children, it is especially frightening because they do not understand the process. Children who have been abused or who have witnessed acts of violence deserve to have everyone involved in their investigation minimize any additional suffering. By safeguarding the rights of child victims and using every available means to minimize their trauma, we enable the voices of children to be

heard, let them regain some control over their lives and bodies, and give them the best opportunity to heal from their abuse.

Endnotes

[1] For the purposes of this article, child abuse is broadly defined and includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, endangering (including children who witness domestic violence), human trafficking, child abduction, and victims of child pornography.
[2] Veh. Code § 27360.
[3] <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0024-entertainment-ratings> (accessed Oct. 9, 2018); <https://www.mpaa.org/film-ratings/> (accessed Oct. 9, 2018)
[4] <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/minimum-legal-drinking-age.htm> (accessed Oct. 9, 2018).
[5] Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(c)(1).
[6] Article I, section 28(e) of the California Constitution defines victim as a person who suffers direct or threatened physical, psychological, or financial harm as a result of the commission or attempted commission of a crime or delinquent act. The term "victim" also includes the person's spouse, parents, children, siblings, or guardian, and includes a lawful representative of a crime victim who is deceased, a minor, or physically or psychologically incapacitated. Children who are witnesses to crimes of violence will qualify as "victims" if they suffered psychological harm due to witnessing the crime.
[7] Pen. Code §§ 288(d); 11164(b).
[8] https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html (accessed Oct. 10, 2018).
[9] Vincent J. Felitti, et al., *Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study* (May 1998) 14 American Journal of Preventive Medicine 4: 245–258, <https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(98)00017-8/fulltext> (accessed Oct. 9, 2018).
[10]Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(b)(4).
[11] See Pen. Code §§ 293; 293.5.
[12] Pen. Code § 1543; Cal. Rules of Court, rules 2.550–2.551.
[13] <https://vinelink.vineapps.com/login/CA> (accessed Oct. 9, 2018).
[14] Pen. Code § 136.2(a)(1)(G)(i).
[15] Pen. Code § 136.2(a)(1)(G)(ii)(|).
[16] Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(b)(6); Pen. Code § 679.02(a)(12).
[17] Pen. Code § 868.7(1).
[18] Pen. Code § 1347(b)(1)–(2). See also *Maryland v. Craig* (1990) 497 U.S. 836; *People v. Lujan* (2012) 211 Cal.App.4th 1499 [cert. for part. pub.].
[19] Pen. Code § 868.8.
[20] Evid. Code § 710.

[21] Pen. Code §§ 868.5(a); 939.21(a).
[22] See also *People v. Spence* (2012) 212 Cal.App.4th 478; *People v. Chenault* (2014) 227 Cal.App.4th 1503.
[23] Marianne Dellinger, *Using Dogs for Emotional Support of Testifying Victims of Crime* (May 2009) 15 Animal Law 171: 172–178 <https://www.animallaw.info/sites/default/files/lralvol15_2_p171.pdf> (accessed Sep. 11, 2018).
[24] See CALCRIM 330; CALJIC 2.20.1.
[25] Pen. Code § 13835.4.
[26] Pen. Code § 13835(a)
[27] Pen. Code § 13835.5 lists a number of mandatory services, including:

1. Crisis Intervention
    a. Funeral/Burial arrangements
    b. Crime scene clean up referrals
    c. Relocation assistance
    d. Home security
    e. Family or work notification
    f. Assistance obtaining restraining orders
2. Emergency Assistance
    a. Food – referral to food banks or food cards
    b. Housing – shelter referrals
    c. Clothing
    d. When necessary – cash.
3. Resources and referrals
    a. Medical or Dental
    b. Mental Health
4. Assistance in filing a California Victim Compensation Board application
5. Return of Property
6. Orientation to the Criminal Justice System
    a. Orientation to court
    b. VINE notification
7. Court Escort /Support
8. Case Status/ Disposition
9. Notification to friends/relatives as well as employer notification
10. Assistance in determining restitution owed by the defendant.

[28] Pen. Code § 679.02(a)(8).
[29] Gov. Code § 13950 et seq.
[30] Judicial Council of California, *Bench Handbook: The Child Witness* (2016) pp. 37–45. <http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/protem/pubs/ChildVictim.pdf> (accessed Sep. 11, 2018).
[31] <https://www.rchsd.org/programs-services/chadwick-center/kids-and-teens-in-court/> (accessed Sep. 11, 2018).

[32] *Id.*
[33] Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(b)(8); (b)(10); Pen. Code § 679.02(a)(3).
[34] Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(b)(13)–(14); Pen. Code § 1202.4(a)(1).
[35] Pen. Code § 1202.4(f)(3)(F).
[36] Pen. Code § 136.2(i).
[37] Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(b)(15)–(16); Pen. Code § 679.02(a)(5).
[38] <https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/victim_services/application.html> (accessed Sep. 11, 2018).

Kathy Cady *has been a prosecutor with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office since 1989. She has tried over 100 felony jury trials and specializes in family violence, child abuse, and sexual assault cases. She is currently the deputy-in-charge of the Victim Impact Program (VIP) and supervises deputy district attorneys who vertically prosecute cases involving sexual assault of adults, physical and sexual assaults of children, elder abuse, family violence, stalking cases, and hate crimes in the Los Angeles County District Attorney Pasadena Branch Office. She was previously the special assistant to the director for the Bureau of Victim Services, which assists victims of violent crime.*

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Did you know that undergraduate, graduate students, and young professionals (5 or fewer years from school) can now get a **30% discount** off their new member fees when they join APSAC? For Students that's 30% off $30. For Young Professionals, that's 30% off $95. They'll receive all the APSAC benefits plus receive the YAPSAC quarterly newsletter and learn about writing opportunities through the Research to Practice Briefs. Please share this information and let's reach out to our young colleagues and let them know of this great opportunity. The discount code is **YAPSAC30.** Not only is APSAC more affordable than ever, but it is offering more member benefits than ever. Visit apsac.org to learn more.

RED Teams: Evaluating an innovative team approach to child maltreatment decision-making

by Jaclyn Chambers, Ph.D. Candidate
University of California, Berkeley

Jaclyn Chambers, Ph.D. Candidate, University of California, Berkeley, is the winner of the CAPSAC Paul Crissey Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research. Jaclyn was presented with the award, which included a grant of $750 and a one-year paid APSAC membership, at the Joint Reception of CAPSAC, APSAC, AVA, NCAN, and ISPCAN held January 27, 2019 at the 34th Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment.

Introduction

One of the most important decisions in child welfare is how to handle initial hotline reports of suspected maltreatment. This decision determines whether or not a family will receive further intervention by child protective services in order to ameliorate child abuse and neglect. Currently, child welfare screening decisions in most jurisdictions are made by an individual caseworker in collaboration with a supervisor, and the focus is merely on risk and safety. Alternatively, a multi-disciplinary team approach to decision-making could shift the focus to assessing needs and strengths, and lead to a more thoughtful response to a child's alleged experience of maltreatment.

One method for improving child welfare screening decision-making is RED Teams (Review, Evaluate, Direct; Sawyer & Lohrbach, 2005). RED Teams utilize a team decision-making process wherein a team with varied and multidisciplinary expertise determines the best course of action for a hotline referral. RED Teams often utilize differential response (DR) – a parallel, community-based service system designed to serve family needs in low-risk situations.

RED Teams have been implemented in other California counties, but have not been empirically evaluated to determine the impact on family outcomes. This study will conduct the first known empirical evaluation of RED Teams.

Continued…

Importance

This project is especially relevant to CAPSAC's mission, as it aims to evaluate a potential state-of-the-art practice for child welfare professionals involved in front end decision-making. If RED Teams are found to have positive outcomes, this project could help promote dissemination of evidence-based practices for maltreatment prevention and early intervention.

Background

Child welfare hotline workers are the first point of contact for reporting suspected abuse or neglect, and they receive an estimated 4 million referrals each year (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2017). Less than optimal decision-making at the hotline could result in denying services to families in need, or alternatively, lead to families' unnecessary involvement with the child welfare system. However, there has been very little research on decision-making among hotline workers who make initial screening determinations. This study will focus on addressing this important gap in the literature.

This study also fits within the broader field of DR research. Because engagement in services must be a precursor to program effects, more research is necessary to understand the factors that facilitate client engagement in DR. One of the goals of multidisciplinary team decision-making through the RED Team is to refer more families to DR services, to enhance DR staff knowledge about families prior to making contact, and to increase the likelihood of client engagement because of enhanced knowledge about families' needs and strengths and because of a joint response with child protective services (CPS).

Team decision-making is gaining attention as a promising practice in the child welfare literature (Bell, 2001; Jent et al., 2009; Lietz, 2008; Rankine, 2013; Soni, 2013). RED Teams utilize a team decision-making process wherein a team with multidisciplinary expertise comprehensively assesses a family's risk and needs and then determines the best course of action for a hotline referral. This study will conduct the first empirical evaluation of RED Teams.

Continued…

Study design

In this study, conducted in collaboration with the San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA) and local community-based DR agencies, referrals handled by a

RED Team (experimental group) will be compared to referrals handled via the current treatment-as-usual screening and investigation process (comparison group).

The study design mimics a randomized controlled-clinical trial (referred to as "pseudo- randomization"). Participants will include all families who are screened in at the hotline following a child maltreatment referral at SF HSA and whose case has been assigned to a "10- day response" within the agency for suspected abuse or neglect within the study period (approximately January 2018 through December 2018). Cases that require a 10-day response are typically assessed as being at lower risk for child maltreatment. All hotline referrals that are logged on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and that are deemed a 10-day response will be handled by RED Teams, and all 10-day referrals that are logged on the remaining 5 days of the week will be handled with a conventional ER response.

Experimental Condition. RED Teams utilize a team decision-making process wherein a group of individuals with multidisciplinary expertise determines the best course of action for non-emergency referrals. RED team members include staff from HSA, DR, and specialty providers from the fields of domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and nursing. The RED Team determines whether a family should be referred to DR, what the family is likely to need, how the family should be initially approached, and the resources that should be made available. RED Teams use a standardized Consultation Framework that identifies key facts, strengths, and risks for a referral. All members of the team are engaged in completing the Consultation Framework so that they can jointly determine next steps for the family. These next steps might include a collaborative response between DR and the CPS staff member, or referral to CPS for a standard investigation.

Control Condition. Families randomized to the control condition will be handled via a traditional, treatment-as-usual ER response.

Continued…

Research aims

The proposed study will test the following hypotheses regarding the effectiveness of the RED Team process in decreasing risk and strengthening families. Compared to families assessed using the usual method, families assessed by RED Teams will be more likely: (1) to be referred to DR services, (2) to contact and engage with DR providers, and (3) to have safe children following referral to DR. Administrative data from HSA will be collected and analyzed for 480+ families in total (approximately 240 served by RED Teams and at least 240 served by traditional response).

Conclusion

This project offers an exciting opportunity to conduct a randomized controlled trial – a rarity in child welfare – on a promising child maltreatment intervention. The aims of this project will advance knowledge about what works to address child maltreatment and will support the development of evidence-based practices for child welfare professionals.

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Call for Applications for the…

Paul Crissey Graduate Student Research Grant

to be awarded January 2020 by CAPSAC

The California Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (CAPSAC) annually awards a grant of **$750** for outstanding research by a graduate student (up to one-year post MA/Ph.D. degree) in the field of child maltreatment. The recipient will also receive a one-year membership to APSAC (American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children) and CAPSAC.

The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (apsac.org), founded in 1987, is a nonprofit national organization focused on meeting the needs of professionals engaged in all aspects of services for maltreated children and their families. Especially important to APSAC is the dissemination of state-of-the-art practice in all professional disciplines related to child abuse and neglect.

CAPSAC aims to provide additional support to California professionals working in the field of child abuse through training, consultation, advocacy and networking.

Applicants must:

1. Be a graduate student within one year completion (before or after) of a Master's or Doctorate degree from an accredited California educational program;

2. Submit a one thousand word summary of the research in progress or completed study in the field of child maltreatment. The study title should be on the first page of the

summary. Identifying information (name, address, telephone number, title of study and academic institution) should be sent in a separate file that will not be sent to the reviewers;

3. Submit one or two letters of recommendation from faculty members or academic readers who are familiar with your research;

4. Be available to receive the award and present a poster of the study at the CAPSAC reception at the January 2020 San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment. Travel expenses will be paid not to exceed $300.00. Alternatively, be available to receive the award and present an overview of the study at a CAPSAC meeting or a CAPSAC training event in 2020.

5. Agree to the publication of the submitted summary in the CAPSAC newsletter, *The Consultant*.

Deadline: All materials must be received by **November 1, 2019.**

Send submissions to:

CAPSAC Research Award Committee, c/o Toni Cavanagh Johnson, Ph.D. at toni@tcavjohn.com

If you have any questions, contact Research Award Committee Chair: Toni Cavanagh Johnson, Ph.D. at toni@tcavjohn.com/ +1(626) 817-2142.

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Register Today for our 26th Colloquium
Join APSAC in Salt Lake City, Utah this Summer!
June 18-22, 2019

APSAC's 26th Colloquium will bring high-quality learning opportunities to child maltreatment researchers and practitioners across experience levels and professions. Sessions have been designated as beginning, intermediate, or advanced level content. Sessions will be designed for professionals in mental health, social work, medicine and nursing, law, education, law enforcement, prevention, research, advocacy, child protective service, and allied fields.

Interested in sponsoring APSAC's 26th Colloquium? Check out our **exhibitor and sponsor opportunities** and **register as a sponsor**. For more information about the 2019 Colloquium, contact **Jim Campbell**.

Visit apsac.org to register.

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