

Child Protection Accountability Commission & Maternal and Child Death Review Commission
2024-2025 Action Plan

The Child Protection Accountability Commission (CPAC) and the Maternal and Child Death Review Commission (MCDRC) convened a Joint Retreat on November 3, 2023. The recommendations from the 2023 Joint Retreat stem from the review of 187 child abuse and neglect death and near-death cases approved by CPAC for incidents that occurred between January 2020 and December 2022. The result was 735 findings and 348 strengths. Fourteen prioritized recommendations for system improvement divided into 4 focus areas (Medical, MDT, Legislation and Funding/Resources) are below. The 2024-2025 Action Plan was approved by CPAC on February 14, 2024, and by MCDRC on March 22, 2024. All the recommendations below will be assigned to the appropriate entity and monitored by the CPAC Grants Oversight Committee. Updates will be provided to CPAC and MCDRC at least semi-annually.

Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
Medical Response Recommendations (4)		
1. Substantially and significantly improve the medical response to child poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure cases. SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee – CAN Best Practices Workgroup and Medical Response to Child Abuse Workgroup		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Develop an advanced medical training on child poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure which should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The differences between medical blood draws and evidentiary blood draws. ii. How to best report these cases without labeling them as “accidental.” iii. Best practices for the medical and MDT response to child poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure cases with an emphasis on emergency and urgent care personnel. iv. Utilization of child poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure case studies from CAN. 	6 months	Goal is to include the drug ingestion changes in the 2025 Mandatory Reporting for Medical Professional offerings.

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
Medical Response Recommendations (4)		
b. Partner with DFS on how medical should best report poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure cases without labeling as “accidental” and to standardize how and what cases DFS accepts for investigation.	6 months	
c. Update existing Medical Mandatory Reporting Training to include an overview on child poisoning via drug ingestion and exposure cases.	6 months	
2. Continue improvements to the medical response training for child physical and sexual abuse cases.		
SOURCE: Similar recommendations made in 2015, 2016-2017, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 Action Plans.		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee – Medical Response to Child Abuse Workgroup		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Periodically review reporting breakdowns by medical professionals and construct targeted or advanced trainings to improve compliance.	Ongoing	
b. Consider referencing the Child Protector mobile application as a resource to assist medical professionals in their examinations and consideration of abuse or neglect.	6 months	
c. Consider offering in person training options for the Medical Professional Mandatory Reporting Training.	6 months	
d. Develop specialized and advanced targeted trainings to various medical groups and utilize case studies to establish relevance.	Ongoing	
e. Secure a CPAC medical contractor to conduct trainings and fully implement recommendations.	Ongoing	
f. Adapt and incorporate Nemours standardized pathway flow chart to be utilized as a tool in training emergency room medical professionals how to assess for child abuse or neglect.	12–18 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)

Medical Response Recommendations (4)

3. Provide opportunities for medical professionals to consult with a child abuse medical expert and promote and secure resources for medical child abuse expertise downstate.

SOURCE: Similar recommendations made in 2020-2021 Action Plan.

ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Grants Oversight Committee and Nemours VOCA Grant Advisory Board

Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Design and promote information to downstate medical professionals on how to contact and consult with Delaware child abuse medical experts.	24 months	
b. Continue partnership with Nemours, and others as appropriate, to promote and secure resources for downstate medical child abuse expertise.	24 months	
c. Partner with Nemours to expand CARE Team coverage downstate.	24 months	
d. Identify and provide additional child abuse medical resources for Kent and Sussex Counties.	24 months	

4. Improve education on infant deaths and near deaths associated with poisoning via drug ingestion or exposure that involve caregiver impairment.

SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat.

ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: MCDRC and CPAC/MCDRC Drug Ingestion Workgroup

Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Develop or improve prevention messaging to families with unsafe sleep deaths and impairment.	24 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)

Medical Response Recommendations (4)

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| <p>b. Continue work of CPAC/MCDRC Drug Ingestion Workgroup to reduce and prevent child poisoning via drug ingestion or exposure in children by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Unveiling Out of Reach Delaware Campaignii. Promoting safe drug storage for parents and caregiversiii. Increasing awareness and education for parents, caregivers, first responders and medical providers.iv. Utilizing CAN case studies to promote the work.v. Securing resources to support the work. | <p>Ongoing</p> | |
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Ongoing

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
MDT Response Recommendations (4)		
<p>1. Create and enhance regularly occurring training for the MDT on the MOU for the MDT Response to Child Abuse & Neglect.</p> <p>SOURCE: Similar recommendations made in 2016-2017, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 Action Plans.</p>		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee – Mandatory Reporting Workgroup and CAN Best Practices Workgroup		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Train and coach smaller law enforcement agencies with limited training resources.	Ongoing	
b. Design and enhance advanced training to improve MDT response to complex serious injury and child death cases.	24 months	
c. Enhance standard MDT training to emphasize effective communication and collaboration with medical providers.	6 months	
<p>2. Design and provide regularly occurring MDT training on child poisoning via drug ingestion or exposure investigations.</p> <p>SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat.</p>		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee – Mandatory Reporting Workgroup and CAN Best Practices Workgroup		

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
MDT Response Recommendations (4)		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Ensure MDT training includes a substantial understanding of the differences between medical blood draws and evidentiary blood draws.	24 months	
b. Develop advanced training to improve MDT investigative response to child poisoning via drug ingestion or exposure.	24 months	
3. Improve the MDT system response to juvenile trafficking cases. SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee – Mandatory Reporting Workgroup and CAN Best Practices Workgroup, Department of Education		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Improve the MDT response to juvenile trafficking by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Developing training which enhances the identification of, reporting of, and response to suspected juvenile trafficking. ii. Utilizing case studies and findings, identified by the CPAC Juvenile Trafficking Oversight Team, which highlight system gaps and strengths in the response to juvenile trafficking. 	24 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
MDT Response Recommendations (4)		
iii. Coordinate with the Delaware Anti-Trafficking Action Counsel (DATAC) and its juvenile committee to ensure consistent education and training resources, and to avoid duplicative efforts or contradictory information.		
b. Support the Department of Education in developing advanced training for educators which improves the identification and reporting of juvenile trafficking cases. Review and update CPAC Mandatory Reporting training for educators to ensure consistency.	12 months	
4. Utilize the CAN Best Practices Workgroup to update and integrate the following into the MOU: SOURCE: Similar recommendations made in 2016-2017, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021 Action Plans.		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Training Committee - CPAC Mandatory Reporting Workgroup and CPAC CAN Best Practices Workgroup		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Update the MOU App to include a 24/7 DAG line.	24 months	
b. Include an interactive feature that highlights CAN Best Practices.	24 months	
c. Update the MOU with new laws - child crimes and mandatory reporting.	12 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)

Legislative Recommendations (2)

1. Review and update child sexual abuse laws and Delaware’s sentencing guidelines regarding protecting students in school settings, enhancing crimes and penalties for child sexual abuse, and overseeing juvenile trafficking cases.

SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat and the 2023 CPAC Final Report on the Investigation, Prosecution and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse

ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Legislative Committee

Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Partner with the Department of Education to draft and pass student services permit legislation.	3 months	
b. Review and update SENTAC guidelines for sexual crimes against children.	24 months	
c. Support passage of HB170 and the statutory creation of the CPAC Juvenile Trafficking Oversight Team.	3 months	
d. Consider enhanced sentencing penalties for the crime of Rape involving a child to include a life sentence.	12 months	
e. Review sex crimes against children, update code as needed, and implement any recommendations from the 2023 CPAC Final Report on the Investigation, Prosecution and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse.	24 months	

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2. Continue reviewing and updating child physical abuse laws and Delaware’s sentencing guidelines regarding criminal child physical abuse cases, including consideration of a crimes against children section in Delaware Code.

SOURCE: Similar recommendations made in 2013 CPAC Final Report on the Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse, and 2015, 2016-2017, and 2020-2021 Action Plans.

ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Legislative Committee

Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
1. Review civil and criminal definitions of abuse and neglect.	12 months	
2. Revise the Endangering the Welfare statute.	3 months	
3. Create a negligent mens rea for child abuse, and create a statute to address those who enable child abuse or fail to seek medical treatment.	12 months	
4. Modify the crime of Murder by Abuse or Neglect.	3 months	
5. Review inconsistencies in Title 11 due to the differing definitions of physical injury and serious physical injury and update as needed.	12 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
Funding and Resources Recommendations (4)		
<p>1. Advocate for increased in funding and resources for the Department of Justice for the Special Victims Unit and the Juvenile Trafficking Unit.</p> <p>SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat</p>		
<p>ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Executive Committee</p>		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
<p>a. Support the Department of Justice’s budgetary requests for additional Deputy Attorney Generals (DAGs) for child crime cases.</p>	12 months	
<p>b. Collaborate with the Department of Justice, Office of the Investigation Coordinator, and Office of the Child Advocate to develop a DOJ database for child victims of abuse, neglect, and juvenile trafficking, or implement the Apricot system at DOJ.</p>	3 months	
<p>c. Identify a Department of Justice investigator that can be assigned to human trafficking unit.</p>	24 months	
<p>2. Advocate for compensation and benefit modifications for all DFS employees.</p> <p>SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat</p>		
<p>ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Executive Committee</p>		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
<p>a. Write letter to the General Assembly’s Joint Finance Committee supporting DSCYF efforts to modify its compensation and benefits for all DFS employees.</p>	12 months	

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Prioritized Recommendations from 2023 Joint Retreat (14)		
Funding and Resources Recommendations (4)		
b. Partner with DSCYF to understand limitations of current compensation structure.	12 months	
3. Continue support of House Bill 86, establishing dedicated organizations to represent indigent parents in DSCYF custody proceedings. SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat, CIP Steering Committee and CIP Quality Representation Workgroup		
ENTITY RESPONSIBLE: CPAC Executive Committee and CIP Steering Committee		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Update letter from May 2023 supporting bill and send it to sponsors as well as the General Assembly’s Joint Finance Committee.	3 months	
4. Develop and maintain a statewide resource list for families and children (i.e., Network of Care). SOURCE: 2023 Joint Retreat and the 2023 CPAC Final Report on the Investigation, Prosecution and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse		
AGENCY RESPONSIBLE: Children’s Advocacy Center, Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, Office of the Child Advocate		
Actions	Anticipated Completion Date	Status Updates
a. Review current resource list from other states.	12-18 months	
b. Identify, develop, and maintain a comprehensive directory of TF-CBT therapist throughout the state	12-18 months	
c. Identify, develop, and maintain a directory of online mental health services available throughout the state. Consider utilizing Network of Care to develop and implement online directory.	12-18 months	