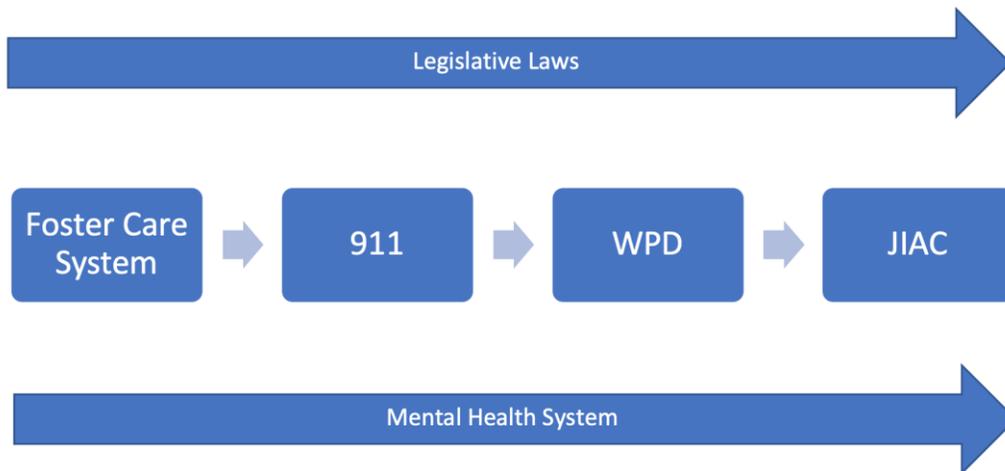


**Sedgwick County Department of Corrections
Community Task Force Recommendations
April 25, 2022**

Purpose of the Task Force: To review and recommend preferred system improvements after the incident and death of Cedric Lofton

Goal of the Task Force: Develop recommendations for improvements and changes to the existing system standards and performance of Department of Children and Families (DCF), law enforcement, and youth corrections programs



The Task Force met 13 times from February 3 through April 25, 2022. Task Force meetings are available for viewing on Sedgwick County’s Facebook page. Meeting summaries and materials shared are available at <https://www.sedgwickcounty.org/community-taskforce/>.

Community Task Force members invited by Sedgwick County who agreed to serve:

- Lamont Anderson, Community Partner
- Annmarie Arensberg, KVC Hospital Wichita
- Marquetta Atkins, Destination Innovation
- Taben Azad, Wichita Asian Association
- Larry Burks, Sr., NAACP – Wichita Branch
- Poncho Bustos, USD 259
- Mike Fonkert, Kansas Appleseed
- Monique Garcia, Community Partner
- Steve House, Juvenile Defense Counsel
- Debbie Kennedy, Wichita Children’s Home
- Pastor C. Richard Kirkendoll, Greater Wichita Ministerial League
- Dr. Rhonda Lewis, Community Partner
- Holly Osborne/Valerie Leon, St. Francis Ministries
- Lilliana Rivera, NAACP – Wichita Branch
- Jazmine Rogers, Progeny
- Dr. April Terry, Kansas Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Members added by the Task Force:

- Tracey Mason, Community Partner
- NaQuela Pack, Community Partner
- Yusef Presley, Community Partner
- Nina Shaw-Woody, Kansas Family Advisory Network
- Yeni Telles, Sunflower Community Action
- Natalie Zarate, Community Partner

Please see addendum at end of recommendations for list of resource members and those who spoke before the Task Force.

Task Force Actions

Letter to Department of Justice (DOJ)

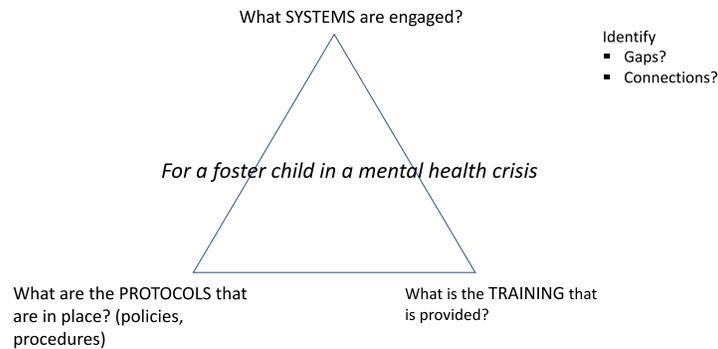
The Task Force discussed sending a letter to the Department of Justice and asked Task Force member Steve House for assistance. The Task Force reviewed sample letters, provided feedback to Steve House who then drafted a letter for the Task Force to review and edit. After feedback from the Task Force the letter was finalized, approved and sent to the DOJ on February 28.

[Task Force Letter to Department of Justice](#)

Systems Recommendations

The Task Force developed the following recommendations for systems changes and improvements through discussions related to the systems reviewed in meetings. The Task Force reviewed and revised the recommendations for intent and clarity and used a consensus model to put forth these agreed-upon recommendations.

Framework for Task Force discussion



To provide some direction to policy makers and systems staff on priority, Task Force members voted for their top five priorities. Some recommendations that were already in process may have had fewer votes because they were close to finalized. The Task Force deems all recommendations critically important to make to achieve needed change.

FOSTER CARE

We recommend:

1. **Fully funding evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs for youth and families before youth are placed in the foster care system**, including intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) services, support for families in the home, behavioral programs, and substance abuse programs, among others. Doing so will build stronger families and alleviate stress on the foster care system – allowing for improved levels of care.
2. Requiring the Child Placing Agency and Case Management Provider has a **local contact trained in mental health crisis response on call 24/7** for crisis situations; and create consequences for any agency not following this requirement. Additionally, developing protocol that states if a Child Placing Agency worker is not available during a crisis, a **supervisor** will be called.
3. Creating an **eco-system** that connects community resources, grassroot organizations, advocates, coaches, champions, and others with the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF), Law Enforcement, Sedgwick County COMCARE, Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center (JIAC) and Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) and other systems that serve foster care children in a mental health crisis.
4. Formalizing **standard procedures** so both the Child Placing Agency and Case Management providers are legally responsible for the foster children in their care.
5. Developing and implementing **standardized training** for foster care, law enforcement, 911, JIAC and JDF personnel, to include topics on de-escalation, mental health first aid, adolescent brain development and de-stigmatization of mental health, as well as when and under what circumstances a youth can and should be taken to Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph, as opposed to JIAC. *[See also in Recommendations for 911, WPD, Juvenile Corrections]*

Additionally,

6. Requiring foster families to complete a standardized program in adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and trauma-informed care that are culturally relevant, and gender-responsive. If they don't participate, they are disqualified from participating in the foster care program.

7. Requiring DCF and its contracting foster care agencies to ensure employees, foster families and foster children receive benefits that include mental health and mindfulness coaches; additionally, ensure staffing to cover employee caseloads so that employees can utilize benefits such as mental health/mindfulness, vacations, etc., and not return to a backload that prevents them from providing the best care to youth and families.
8. Expanding the Crossover Youth Practice Model for sharing data and system protocols between DCF, school districts, and the juvenile justice system, to allow those agencies to effectively serve the foster youth in their care.
9. Supporting the passage of HB 2468 and HB 2469, which establishes the foster youth and foster parent bill of rights and requires distribution to each foster youth and foster family; ask Sedgwick County to add HB 2468 and HB 2469 to its 2023 Legislative Agenda.
10. Administering an assessment (using disaggregated data) of the youth in the foster care system that allows root cause issues to be identified and a strategic plan developed that will address barriers and systemic issues.
11. DCF design and disseminate a roadmap to assist foster families in accessing local community services and support to aid in the care of youth in the foster care system.
12. Supporting the enactment of SB 12 (approved in 2022), which requires DCF to develop an implementation plan for a set of performance-based contracts to provide an array of evidence-based prevention and early intervention services.
13. Extending a thank-you to foster families for the support and sacrifice they make in providing homes for children in need of care.
14. Developing and implementing a pre/post survey to evaluate satisfaction of families who participate in Family First and Family Preservation programs. Utilize feedback to enhance program and service delivery.

SEDGWICK COUNTY 911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

We recommend...

1. Develop an uninterrupted, 24/7 **mobile mental health response system** that can be dispatched by 911 through a combination of the following –
 - 1 a. Increasing funding for COMCARE mobile response team to increase availability.
 - 1.b. Increasing funding for ICT One, so they can be available 24/7.
 - 1.c. Developing and implementing a new crisis response model that focuses on having a mental health and medical responder available for crisis calls, with a process in place to engage with law enforcement as appropriate for each call.
2. Embed **qualified mental health providers** within the 911 system.
 - Austin, TX, model
 - Colorado model
3. Add an additional position, “**Continuing Education Coordinator,**” to the 911 budget to enrich continuing education and training for 911 employees to better screen callers, develop tools to evaluate mental health needs and then transfer to COMCARE or another agency as appropriate.
4. By December 2022, establish a **community advisory board** that is reflective of the diverse communities 911 services. This advisory board should create plans for transparency and acknowledgement of board members conflict of interest.
5. Address the high turnover rates at 911 by continuing to **improve pay; improve diversity in recruitment and hiring** for 911 staff; and add **benefits** that focus on the wellness of 911 personnel.

WICHITA POLICE DEPARTMENT (WPD)

We recommend...

1. Increasing **funding for COMCARE mobile mental health unit and ICT One**, so they can be available 24/7 and dispatched by 911 as a resource that serves the community.
2. Developing and implementing **standardized training** for foster care, law enforcement, 911, JIAC and JDF personnel, to include topics on de-escalation, mental health first aid, adolescent brain development and de-stigmatization of mental health, as well as when and under what circumstances a youth can and should be taken to Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph, as opposed to JIAC. *[Cross-reference same recommendation for Foster Care, JIAC]*
3. Creating an **eco-system** in Wichita and Sedgwick County that provides a tightly engaged network of collaborators between the systems that intersect with foster youth who might be facing a mental health crisis, and the grassroots agencies in the community that can fill in the gaps for these youth. The agencies include DCF, Law Enforcement, COMCARE, JIAC and JDF. Grassroots organizations include advocates, coaches, champions, and others. Organizations and individuals elected to be a part of the eco-system will be required to attend FREE training provided by the city/county that would cover topics such as: crisis intervention, de-escalation, mental health first aid and other training as identified by the organization.
4. By 2023, create a **centralized database** at the Wichita Police Department that fosters transparency in the collaborations that exist between WPD and the community. The database will provide easy access for law enforcement, as well as a mechanism for other grassroots organizations to be added to the resource list for future collaborations.
 - 4a. Additionally, the Wichita Police Department will include in the database information about how it is continually engaging in **authentic dialogue** to eliminate barriers, address biases and build trust with marginalized groups throughout the community. This engagement will occur through attending/partnering in community events, attending neighborhood and community organization meetings, as well as hosting community forums.
5. Hiring (3) full-time and (3) part-time **qualified mental health professionals** to be on staff to support WPD employees. Supporting employees with their mental health has a direct impact on how employees show up and serve Wichita's diverse community.
6. Requiring mandatory **trauma-informed training** for law enforcement to better understand and serve all members of the community – but especially those from minority, underserved and at-risk populations who are more likely to struggle with PTSD and other forms of trauma.

Additionally,

7. Requiring **CIT training for all law enforcement supervisors** and for **all law enforcement officers** between their third and fifth year in the field. Officers who are between 1-2 years of service should be **required to attend continuing mental health education** to ensure officers remain up to date on mental health practices and changes.
8. Creating a **culture** at WPD that lives up to the expectations to “protect and serve” all people in Wichita’s **diverse community**. Included in this recommendation is an annual review of employee expectations and policies to identify ineffective processes and unacceptable behaviors. This recommendation also should be considered along with support of the findings from the independent review currently being conducted because of racist text messages sent/received by several members of the police department.
9. Enhancing the **Axon policy** to include language that requires Officers to leave their body cameras on throughout an entire incident, including the completion of paperwork. Additionally, a process should be developed for random review of Axon footage and should be included as a part of the Officers periodic coaching and annual performance evaluation.
10. Requiring all training related to mental health, trauma, cultural and gender diversity, and implicit bias be **required at regular intervals** for all law enforcement, JIAC and JDF personnel. (See also in Youth Corrections.)
11. Fostering a culture at WPD that allows **exceptions to police protocols** so an officer can escalate above the Supervisor’s order when responding to calls involving foster youth in a mental health crisis. This is needed due to the complexities of multiple jurisdictions and custodies involved when a child is in the foster care system.
12. Developing and implementing a **MOU** between the Wichita Police Department and Juvenile Intake Assessment Center (JIAC) that honors the 2016 US Attorney General Opinion and clearly outlines that arrest report must be completed before youth is released to JIAC. The arrest report should include all details from the original classification of the call from dispatch to final classification of the call when the youth arrives at JIAC, all expectations for youth brought to the facility, transfers, arrest reports, officer release form, etc. *[See also in JIAC Recommendations]*
13. Ongoing **implicit bias training and testing** that includes, race, culture and gender diversity, for all law enforcement officers and supervisors.
14. Expanding the **Community Support Specialists** at WPD.

YOUTH CORRECTIONS

We recommend...

1. By July 1, 2022, updating JIAC Policy 8.810 – **Use of Force**, so that it states:
 - Once youth is secured in a cell, instead of holding him/her down in the prone position, close the cell and allow the youth to calm down.
 - Do not use any position that covers the youth’s chest.
 - Only allow the prone position to be used to cuff and sit or cuff and stand.
 - One staff person is responsible for video/audio recording any incidents of restraint, keeping time to ensure a youth is sitting or standing immediately after cuffing/restraining, and the youth is in overall good health and wellbeing. This person would also be observing employees and in charge of “tapping out” anyone who appears to have reached his or her physical, mental, or emotional limit when working with a youth. This person should never assist in restraining the youth. *[KJCC has a program that could be used as a model.]*
2. Increasing Sedgwick County funding to JDF to provide for **core mental health services** that also support JIAC, so those services provided by JIAC are not dependent on grant funds for mental health programs at the local level.
3. Requiring a **nursing staff person** to be present at JIAC/Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) 24/7.
4. Establishing a long-term goal for the Kansas Department of Corrections to develop and implement a strategy that moves juvenile justice systems to a **restorative justice system**.
5. Supporting the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition legislative agenda to **increase the number of mental health professionals** in Sedgwick County.

Additionally

6. Requesting a **Legislative post-audit** be conducted to examine the implications of the “Stand Your Ground” laws, particularly as it relates to incidents involving law enforcement.
7. Ensuring JIAC and JDF provide **trauma care services** for youth who experience a traumatic, crisis event while at JIAC or JDF. Services could be delivered onsite, as well as in the community once a child is released.
8. Requiring **CIT training** for JIAC and JDF personnel.

9. Creating a **database at JIAC that identifies grassroots organizations** that serve youth who are impacted by the youth correction systems. A transparent process should be developed and implemented that allows the community to see organizations included in the database, as well as creates opportunity for other organizations to be added to the database. Organizations listed in the database will be intentionally engaged and provided with technical assistance to apply for grant funds that allow for culturally relevant, gender and trauma-based programs are available for youth. (Opportunity to coordinate with similar recommendation for WPD.)
10. Establishing a **“calming room”** at JIAC that could be safe for youth experiencing some form of distress, where they can be safely left alone and not restrained.
11. Prioritizing in the County’s upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget updates for the **video recording system** at JIAC to cover more areas of the lobby and holding rooms, and a recording system that includes **audio capacity**.
12. Supporting the expansion of the statewide **Crossover Youth Practice model** implementation to every judicial district in Kansas and develop local protocols to serve youth with involvement in child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
13. Creating and staffing a **Citizen’s Review Board** for JIAC and JDF, with quasi-judicial powers.
14. Ongoing **implicit bias training and testing** that includes, race, culture and gender diversity, for all JIAC and JDF personnel.
15. Ensuring a reliable level of service for **remote/virtual access to mental health** consults at JIAC and JDF from COMCARE or another mental health provider. The providers need to be available 24/7.
16. Updating the language of the JIAC **Medical Criteria for Admission Form 8.804** so it requires current and accurate information prior to transfer.
17. Requiring all training related to mental health, trauma, cultural and gender diversity, and implicit bias be **required at regular intervals** for all law enforcement, JIAC and JDF personnel. (See also in WPD.)

18. Developing and implementing a **MOU** between the Wichita Police Department and Juvenile Intake Assessment Center (JIAC) that honors the 2016 US Attorney General Opinion and clearly outlines that arrest report must be completed before youth is released to JIAC. The arrest report should include all details from the original classification of the call from dispatch to final classification of the call when the youth arrives at JIAC, all expectations for youth brought to the facility, transfers, arrest reports, officer release form, etc. *[See also in WPD Recommendations]*
19. Requiring law enforcement officers who bring an allegedly combative, noncompliant youth into the JIAC **to stay on scene, or nearby**, until the juvenile is processed.
20. Striving for **parity in programs** for those impacted by the youth corrections systems, through intentional engagement and funding of culturally competent and gender responsive programming.
21. Not allowing a juvenile in a **Wrap restraint** be brought into the JIAC facility.
22. Not allowing a **single JIAC worker** to handle intake for someone described as “a combative juvenile.”
23. Ensuring all juveniles at JIAC **are separated from each other** (taken to another room), so they are not exposed to potentially traumatic events in the common areas.
24. Strengthening the **Individual Justice Plan (IJP)** process used in different organizations throughout Sedgwick County.
25. Using Team Justice as a vehicle to **gain community volunteers** for Crossover Youth Practice Model

Addendum

Task Force Resource Members

- Steven Stonehouse, Sedgwick County Department of Corrections
- Hope Cooper, Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC)
- Kristin Peterman, Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Shantel Westbrook, Sedgwick County COMCARE
- Lemuel Moore, Wichita Police Department

Speakers

Department of Justice letter

- Steve House, Task Force Member

Juvenile Justice

- Marquette Atkins, Task Force Member, Progeny Juvenile Justice report (From Harm to Healing)

Foster Care System

- Kristin Peterman, Kansas Department of Children and Families
- Frances Breyne Avery, J.D. of Beacon Health Options, and Executive Director of the Kansas Engagement Center
- Mary Ann Smith, DCCCA

Mental Health

- Jennifer Wilson, Sedgwick County COMCARE
- Shantel Westbrook, Sedgwick County COMCARE

Wichita Police Department

- Lem Moore, Interim Chief of Police
- Paul Duff, Interim Deputy Chief
- Bob Reichenberger, Lieutenant
- Tom Fatkin, Lieutenant
- James Hook, Sergeant
- Rebecca Jabara, Officer
- Manny Thompson, Officer

911 – Emergency Response

- Elora Forshee, Director of Emergency Communications

Youth Corrections

- Hope Cooper, Deputy Secretary of Kansas Department of Corrections
- Steve Stonehouse, Deputy Director of Juvenile Programs at Sedgwick County
- Jodi Trongsard, Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center Administrative Manager
- Eric English, Administrative Coordinator Juvenile Detention Center (JDF)

Mental Health

- Robyn Chadwick, Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph Hospital President and Executive Leader for its Behavioral Health Services *District Attorney – Laws*

Law

- Marc Bennett, Sedgwick County District Attorney