

Trauma-Informed Evidenced Based Mental Health Treatments for Children

Dr. Patsy Carter has spearheaded our efforts here at the department working across various sectors including, early childhood, mental health, children welfare and education to raise awareness of the impact of trauma and to develop systems that are more responsive to the needs of children who have traumatized and their families.

Last year, the Office of Child Comprehensive Mental Health had the opportunity to participate on the mental health workgroup of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children. One recommendation that emerged from this task force included improving access to trauma-informed, evidence based mental health treatments for children who have been victimized and traumatized.

Through advocacy efforts, Missouri KidsFirst, the association of child advocacy centers across the state, and the Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral HealthCare, a \$500,000 line item was included in the Division of Behavioral Health's FY 16 budget.

A diverse stakeholder group has begun to meet to develop recommendations as it relates to the \$500,000 secured through the legislative process for improving access to trauma-informed, evidence based mental health treatments for children who have been traumatized and victimized.

The key themes that emerged from the initial discussion included:

- The necessity for service providers to be trauma-informed as a foundation for providing evidence-based care;
- The need to conduct an environmental scan to have a better sense of current evidence-based mental health services for traumatized children in the state;
- The need for training additional providers (motivational interviewing, PCIT, TFCBT);
- Workforce issues and very serious barriers to service provision in rural communities;
- The need for significant policy changes related to Medicaid, insurance and billing that make it very difficult to provide evidence-based care to children; and
- A need to more effectively screen and collaborate with other child serving entities like schools/churches/courts/child welfare/etc.