

**Missouri Statewide Council on Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children**  
Hybrid In-Person/Virtual Meeting  
August 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.  
Capitol Building, House Hearing Room 2

**Meeting Minutes**

Council Member Attendance:

- Chair: Ed Lewis, Missouri State Representative
- Co-Chair: Sarah Unsicker, Missouri State Representative
- Matt Rodriguez, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Darrell Missey, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Connie Berhorst, Missouri Department of Public Safety
- Jessica Seitz, Missouri KidsFirst
- Kim Davis, Missouri State Highway Patrol
- Lisa Schulze, Missouri Department of Corrections
- Mary Weir, Associate Circuit Judge of Jackson County, 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit
- Catherine Vannier, Missouri Office of Prosecution Services

Stakeholder Contributor Attendance:

- Taylor Jones, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Misty Allen, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Angie Swarnes, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Kara Wilcox, Missouri Department of Social Services
- Amy Robins, Children's Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri
- Jessica Rodriguez, assisting Rep. Sarah Unsicker
- Shima Rostami, Gateway Human Trafficking
- Maddie Green, Missouri Attorney General's Office
- Ray Wagner, Missouri Attorney General's Office
- Clifton Davis, Missouri Attorney General's Office
- Catherine Connelly
- Cynthia Berry
- Jared Hankinson
- Brad Banderman
- Kyerra Johnson
- Dora Fichter
- Kile Bay
- Jatonya Clayborn
- Angela Branstetter
- Genevieve Kosay
- Katie Rhoades

1. Approval of Minutes – Distributed with Agenda
  - a. The meeting minutes from July 10, 2023 were approved at 10:03 a.m.

2. Attorney General Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (non-agenda item)
  - a. Ray Wagoner and Clifton Davis, Missouri Attorney General's Office
    - i. New statewide committee to encompass task force with regional components.
    - ii. Human trafficking on the Attorney General's legislative agenda with focus on data collection.
    - iii. A select group of Assistants Attorney General will be specifically trained on elements of human trafficking and available to assist prosecution teams across state.
3. MOCATE Presentation
  - a. Katie Rhoades, Missouri Coalition Against Trafficking & Exploitation (MOCATE)
    - i. In 2018, Healing Action Network absorbed the Coalition Against Trafficking and Exploitation and established it as the state coalition.
    - ii. Coalition working on coordinated community response to include element of data collection.
    - iii. Needs assessment conducted in 2019 that identified a strategic plan regionally and across the state.
      1. Missouri Foundation for Health funding MOCATE to implement strategies.
    - iv. Ultimate goal is to have centralized space for data collection.
      1. Proposal to council to consolidate data from government organizations and non-government organizations into a central repository maintained by MOCATE.
        - a. Under coordinated community response model, the goal includes accessibility of system for all stakeholders involved in the service provision of human trafficking victims, such as law enforcements, children's division, advocates, and/or other service providers.
4. Human Trafficking in Missouri Schools
  - a. Dr. Cynthia Berry
    - i. Gateway Alliance Against Human Trafficking (Gateway HT) study and report on human trafficking in Missouri schools.
    - ii. The 94-page report to be accessible by any entity in the state.
    - iii. In 2020, Missouri ranked fourth highest rate of human trafficking.
    - iv. Report provides definitions related to human trafficking.
    - v. Action, Means, and Purpose
      1. Provides an understanding of what it takes to necessitate service provision.
    - vi. COVID and post-pandemic implications provided in the report.
    - vii. Unveils and dispels the myths about human trafficking.
    - viii. Provides a breakdown of data and statistics from state and national sources.
      1. Recognizes an absence of data sources.

- ix. Human trafficking survivor input provided in the report.
- x. Typical characteristics of a trafficker perpetrator identified.
  - 1. Various recruitment practices discussed.
- xi. Dangers in group homes for purposes of awareness are provided in the report.
- xii. Various vulnerabilities of human trafficking victims shared.
- xiii. Education on human trafficking risk factors included.
  - 1. Behavioral indicators of human trafficking.
  - 2. Mental health data reflects increased risks among Missouri youth.
    - a. Depression identified as a major risk factor.
- xiv. Substance use and abuse discussed in the report linking to human trafficking vulnerabilities.
- xv. Report advocates victim-centered approach while addressing human trafficking victims.
- xvi. Ways in which to establish rapport with a human trafficking victim are shared.
- xvii. Protective factors discussed to educate on strategies for protecting children from human trafficking.
- xviii. Understanding and addressing the victim needs through community collaboration.
- xix. Preventing and addressing human trafficking at the school level including awareness, policies, and protocols.
- xx. How to report human trafficking also provided in the report.

5. Facebook Group Raising Human Trafficking Awareness

- a. Jodi Widhalm
  - i. Tabled for future meeting.

6. Upcoming Legislation

- a. Rep. Ed Lewis
  - i. Proposed statutory language change from “child pornography” to “child sexual abuse material”.

7. New Items/Open Discussion

- a. Next council meeting scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2023 at 10 a.m.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.