

SCAO – Child Welfare Services 2023 Trainings, Resources, and Events

Contact: Kelly Wagner, SCAO-CWS Director, WagnerK@courts.mi.gov

Upcoming 2023 CWS Trainings

March 14, 2023	<p><i>A Thousand Years of Wisdom – Alternative Treatment Options to Address Trauma and Stress</i> Presenter: Judge Frank Szymanski. Via Zoom 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. <i>Details: www.courts.mi.gov/031423TraumaAndStress</i></p>
July 11, 2023	<p><i>Advanced Petition Writing: Telling Your Experience</i> Presenter: Gregg Iddings. Via Zoom 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. <i>Details to follow.</i></p>
Online Training	<p><i>Family Defense 101 Online Training</i> – This 13-part pre-recorded training includes an overview of key aspects of parent representation, including basic legal and advocacy skills and an explanation of the different stages of a child protection case. <i>Additional information can be found on page 2.</i></p>
August 22, 2023	<p><i>Family Defense Forum</i> This half-day, in person training is exclusively for parent attorneys who view the <i>Family Defense 101 Online Training</i>. The Forum will expand upon the online training and include a live Q&A session with some of the series presenters, updated caselaw review, and advocacy consultation.</p>

Additional trainings under development:

- **New CWS Juvenile Data Dashboard** trainings via Zoom. (target: April 13 & 20, 2023). *Data Dashboard information can be found on page 5.*
- **Child Welfare Appellate Law & Practice** – 4-part pre-recorded training series targeted at child welfare appellate attorneys (target: available on CWS website in April).
- **Understanding Sexual Offenders**– in-person training. Date & location TBD (target: summer in Lansing or Detroit)
- **Trauma-Informed Care and Resiliency Court Conference** – in person, full day training. Date & location TBD (target: August in Lansing or Detroit)

Archived CWS training recordings: www.courts.mi.gov/cwsmeetup

**CWS administers the Court Improvement Program (CIP), the Foster Care Review Board Program (FCRB), and the training program for the Governor’s Task Force on Child Abuse & Neglect (GTF).*

Quality Legal Representation

- **Family Defense 101 Online Training:** *Family Defense 101* is an innovative, online training program that provides parent attorneys the opportunity to enhance their legal and advocacy skills in child protective proceedings. The training is self-paced and includes 13 modules ranging between 20-60 minutes in length on the topics listed below. Attorneys interested in attending the half-day, in person Family Defense Forum on August 22, 2023, must view the recordings on the SCAO Learning Management System to be eligible to attend. The in-person Forum will offer live Q & A and consultation with our Court Improvement Program legal consultants, Vivek Sankaran (University of Michigan Law School) and Rick Barinbaum (University of Michigan School of Social Work). The video training series includes the following modules:

1. *The Importance of Family Defense – A Parent’s Perspective*
2. *The Role of the Family Defense Lawyer*
3. *Knowing and Understanding Your Client*
4. *Preventing Unnecessary Removals*
5. *Understanding How CPS & Foster Care Work*
6. *What Jurists Expect from Parent’s Counsel*
7. *Keeping Children Connected with Families*
8. *Out of Court Advocacy*
9. *Handling Adjudication Trials*
10. *Representing Parents at the Dispositional Hearing and Beyond*
11. *Litigating Termination of Parental Rights Cases*
12. *Handling Child Protective Appeals*
13. *Sustaining a Career in Family Defense*

The *Family Defense 101 Online Training* is now available on SCAO’s Learning Management System (LMS) which conveniently allows participation by computer, smart phone, or another smart device. Website: www.courts.mi.gov/FamilyDefense101

- **Child Welfare Appellate Law and Practice: pre-recorded training.** This 4-part video series is targeted at child welfare appellate attorneys and will be available on the CWS public website in April 2023. The 4 trainings will each be 45 – 60 minutes in length on these topics:

1. *Nuts and Bolts of the Child Welfare Appellate Process and Telling Effective Stories*
2. *How to Spot Issues*
3. *Writing a Persuasive Brief*
4. *Delivering Effective Oral Arguments*

- **Consultation on Strategies to Enhance Legal Representation:** CWS provides courts, upon request, expert consultation on high quality legal representation strategies. This includes assistance with the MDHHS Child & Parent Legal Representation Grant which provides partial reimbursement for parent and child legal representation costs in child protective proceedings, as well as strategies to improve the quality of legal representation provided to children and parents.

SCAO – Child Welfare Services Foster Care Review Board Assistance

- **Foster Care Case Reviews**

Courts may request their regional Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) to review and consult on difficult foster care cases to better identify or resolve barriers to permanency. Following a case review meeting, the FCRB provides the court and agency with a written report that includes substantive recommendations regarding the care, supervision, and permanency plan for the children, in addition to addressing any specific concerns cited in the request. The FCRB case review request form can be found here:

https://www.courts.michigan.gov/492be0/siteassets/forms/fcrb/fcrb32_court-review-request-form.pdf

National Youth Engagement Initiative

4 pilot Counties: Mecosta, Monroe, Muskegon, and Oakland

Michigan has been selected as 1 of 8 states to pilot innovative interventions aimed at increasing youth voice and engagement, in an effort to enhance judicial decision-making in foster care cases. The pilot states will be supported with training, technical assistance, and evaluation through the Quality Improvement Center on Engaging Youth in Finding Permanency (QIC-EY). **The National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) will serve as the primary resource for the judicial training and support.** MDHHS identified and selected the 4 intervention counties (Mecosta, Monroe, Muskegon, and Oakland) to participate in this 5-year initiative, which is expected to begin in March 2023. SCAO-CWS will be available for assistance to the intervention site courts, or any other courts interested in increasing youth engagement in their foster care cases, upon request.

**Michigan Supreme Court
2023 Reunification and Adoption Day Events
Request for Court Participation**

- **Michigan Reunification Day June 23, 2023:**

This annual event is held on the terrace of the Hall of Justice and will feature families who have recently had their children successfully returned to their care. The program will feature remarks by at least one CWS liaison Justice, judges and child welfare advocates, as well as inspiring stories of triumph from parents who worked hard to be reunified with their children. The vital role that community partners play in helping to strengthen, support, and reunify families also will be recognized. In addition, two leaders in family preservation work will be honored with the annual Guy Thompson Champion for Reunification Awards. A picnic-style luncheon will be provided, and the event will include children's activities such as games and a face painter. See the Michigan Reunification Day website for more information:

<https://www.courts.michigan.gov/administration/offices/public-information-office/community-outreach-by-the-supreme-court/michigan-reunification-day/>

- **Michigan Adoption Day November 21, 2023:**

This annual event is held in the Michigan Supreme Court Chamber on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving with the theme of *Giving Thanks for Families*. The program will feature adoption finalizations by 2 judges alongside Supreme Court Justice Megan Cavanagh, and presentations of the annual Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award and the Maura D. Corrigan Foster Family Lifetime Achievement Award. The program will also include remarks by child welfare advocates expressing the need for, and appreciation of, families to open their homes to children in need of forever families. See the Michigan Adoption Day website for more information:

<https://www.courts.michigan.gov/administration/offices/public-information-office/community-outreach-by-the-supreme-court/michigan-adoption-day/>

Courts interested in participating in either of these special events are asked to provide the below information to Katy Todd at ToddK@courts.mi.gov by March 1, 2023.

- The name of judge(s) who would like to participate
- The name of the court / county
- If the interest is in Reunification Day or Adoption Day, or both
- Contact person's name, email, and phone number

SCAO – Child Welfare Services Juvenile Data Dashboard

The Michigan Court Improvement Program (CIP), comprised of various child welfare stakeholders, recently developed a Juvenile Data Dashboard to help improve outcomes in child protective proceedings through data sharing and analysis. The Dashboard, expected to be available by March 2023, will include the following webpages relevant to children in foster care. SCAO-CWS will offer 2 trainings via Zoom in April 2023 and can provide technical assistance and consultation to courts upon request. *More information to follow.*

- **Time to Permanency – Statewide**
 - Shows the average number of days to permanency within a selected timeframe by permanency exit reason (reunification, adoption, guardianship, permanently living with a relative, and another planned permanent living arrangement), age, and race; and includes color-coding to identify if permanency was achieved within 12 months. The permanency exit reasons include: reunification, adoption, guardianship, permanently living with a relative, and another planned permanent living arrangement. The data can be viewed at the state level, county level, by SCAO court region, or by MDHHS Business Service Center (BSC).
- **Permanency Outcomes for Indian Children**
 - Shows information on children in foster care statewide who are members of, or eligible for membership in, a federally recognized tribe. The data includes the total number in foster care, the average number of days spent in foster care, the percent that achieved permanency within 12 months and within 15 months, and the most common permanency exit reason. The webpage also shows the average number of days Indian children spent in foster care by year, and the average number of days in foster care by permanency exit reason. This page only displays data at the state level.
- **Child & Family Well-Being**
 - Shows caseworker performance on children’s timely dental exams, children’s timely medical exams, caseworker visits to children, caseworker visits to parents, and parenting time. The data can be viewed at the state level, county level, by SCAO court region, or by MDHHS Business Service Center (BSC).
- **Educational Outcomes**
 - Shows high school graduation and drop-out rates for the following student subgroups: (1) Children in Foster Care, (2) Economically Disadvantaged, (3) English Learner, (4) McKinney Vento, (5) Migrant, and (6) Student with Disability. Graduation rate data is shown in cohorts of graduation within 4 years, 5 years, and 6 years. This page only displays data at the state level.
- **Children in Care**
 - Shows demographics of children in foster care by age, living arrangement, race, and sex. The data can be viewed at the state level, county level, by SCAO court region, or by MDHHS Business Service Center (BSC).

*Most of the data in the Dashboard comes from the Michigan Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (MiSACWIS). The Michigan Department of Education also provides some public education data to the Dashboard.