



# Missouri Network Against Child Abuse

## Strategic Planning Report

November 2023

### Background

Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, is a quickly growing umbrella organization that hosts the State Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), Prevent Child Abuse Missouri, and the SAFE-CARE Network of medical providers conducting sexual assault forensic examinations. Over the course of its previous strategic planning cycle, MO-NACA went through multiple Executive transitions and navigated both significant staff contraction and expansion. In the last two years, MO-NACA achieved a tangible degree of organizational sustainability, developed a new staffing structure, launched a rebranding campaign, and acquired new resources to help it achieve its mission and vision, especially in the area of prevention. MO-NACA engaged Midwest Regional CAC (MRCAC) to facilitate an updated strategic planning process at the beginning of 2023 to help chart the forward trajectory of the organization given its new reality. MRCAC engaged in a significant information gathering process throughout the spring and summer of 2023, including multiple surveys of CAC membership and key stakeholders, interviews with both the Executive Director and the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, and a review of critical organizational policies and practices. This process culminated in an in-person gathering of the MO-NACA Staff and Board in October 2023 to build out the framework, goals, and objectives of a strategic plan that will guide the organization's work for the coming years.

The following report summarizes the outcomes of this process and provides recommendations for implementing the tenets of MO-NACA's new strategic plan. The report includes:

- Descriptions of MO-NACA's agreed-upon priority focus areas
- Proposed long-term visions for each priority focus area
- A preliminary set of short and mid-term goals/objectives
- Recommendations for ongoing strategic planning efforts to ensure the long-term success of the plan
- Recommendations for new organizational structures, policies, and procedures to support the strategic plan's implementation

MRCAC offers this report as a starting point for MO-NACA's new strategic planning period and will be a technical assistance partner throughout the plan's life and beyond. MO-NACA has an incredibly strong foundation, a talented and dedicated staff, and a network of committed partners invested in its success. It has most of what it needs to ensure that it can meet its core objectives and effectively pursue an important vision of change for children and families in Missouri. This plan constitutes a road map for incremental growth that primarily builds on what the organization is already doing very well, but also encourages thoughtful and daring action that will lead to a healthier and stronger state in the future.

## Priority Focus Area Development

Through MO-NACA's most recent rebranding project, an assessment of the organization's full scope of work led to the identification of four focus areas. Additional planning work with the Board and staff identified a fifth focus area which is highlighted below as well. These five focus areas will serve as the organization's supporting pillars through this new strategic planning cycle and can provide a strong filter for taking on new initiatives in the years to come.

# Missouri Network Against Child Abuse Priority Focus Areas

### Membership Support and Networking

MO-NACA will plan efforts to ensure CACs throughout the state have access to the technical assistance support and peer networking opportunities that will allow them to provide the best services possible for children and families.

### Community Education and Outreach

MO-NACA will plan efforts to ensure the profiles of MO-NACA, its members, and its programs are elevated throughout the state among key stakeholders, partners, and community members.

### Public Policy and Legislative Advocacy

MO-NACA will plan efforts to pursue a bold policy and legislative agenda designed to improve access to services for child abuse victims throughout the state and to increase access to resources supporting MO-NACA's programs and members.

### Professional Training and Certification

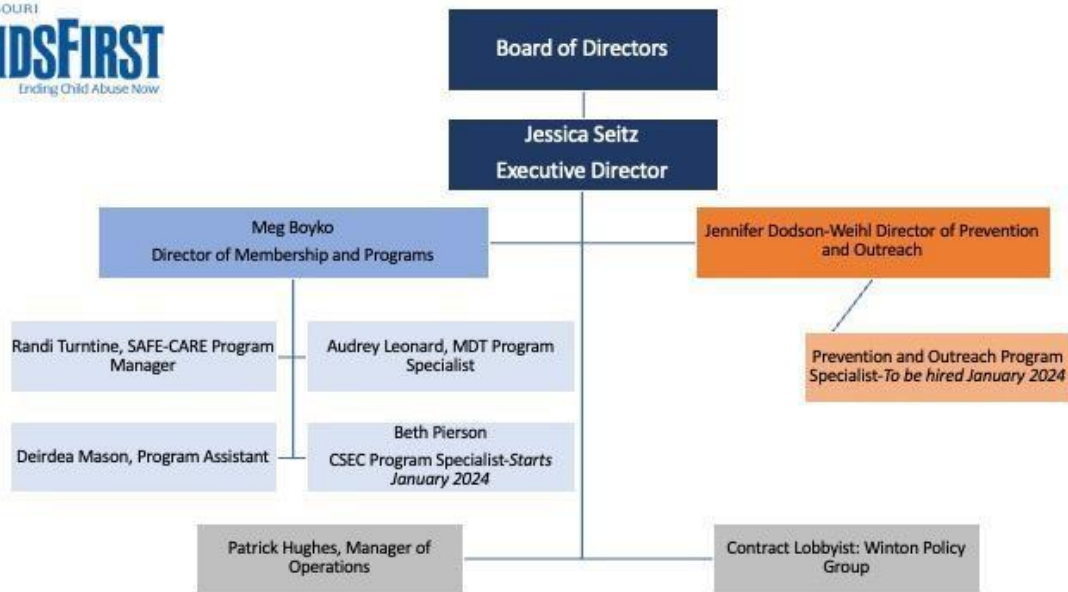
MO-NACA will plan efforts to ensure and improve the quality of services provided to children and families throughout the state by brokering, developing, and delivering exceptional training to child abuse professionals and strengthening its certification programs.

### Internal Capacity and Development

MO-NACA will plan efforts to improve the health and capacity of the organization's team, Board, systems, structures, policies, and procedures by identifying and pursuing critical resources and investing in important professional development opportunities.



MO-NACA currently operates multiple significant programs all of which have designated staff overseeing them, including training and education offerings to Child Advocacy Centers and Multi-Disciplinary Team members, the SAFE-CARE Program, Child Abuse Prevention and newer permanent initiatives including the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Multi-Disciplinary Team Enhancement Initiative. Throughout the strategic planning process, MO-NACA staff and Board expressed a core value that these programs should not be siloed into any one priority focus area, one specific department or one specific staff member. Rather, these programs are critical to all of MO-NACA’s major focus areas, and the staff who lead these efforts should see themselves in each pillar.



Updated: December 12, 2023



## **Creating Outcome Challenges**

Once the Board and staff agreed to the priority focus areas and the manner in which its major programs would be situated throughout the strategic plan framework, they turned to defining long-term desired outcomes under each focus area. The following outcome challenges are detailed descriptions of the vision of change that MO-NACA's Board and staff have in each area of work. These outcome challenges can be both visionary and practical in equal measure, and they might even remain static for the foreseeable future. MRCAC recommends reviewing these outcome challenges every three years to ensure the organization is responding effectively to shifts in the landscape and new opportunities for growth. The outcome challenges defined below will serve as the basis for planning annual goals and objectives for the organization.

### **1. Membership Support and Networking**

MO-NACA envisions networks of child abuse prevention and response professionals who actively inform policy and practice statewide, and who are deeply invested in their own development and quality improvement. Missouri's child abuse prevention and response professionals readily come together for the greater good to collaborate on needed systems change. MO-NACA will work to be the most trusted provider of technical assistance to its members, ensuring that CACs seamlessly outpace their baseline requirements and operate consistently at the highest levels. MO-NACA promotes and supports meaningful peer networking throughout its child abuse prevention and response professional networks. It is committed to enhancing Multi-Disciplinary Team relationships and supporting CACs in that space. MO-NACA is capable of building peer networking structures that meet the evolving needs of child abuse professionals in the state.

### **2. Community Education and Outreach**

MO-NACA envisions a state where adults not connected with the prevention and response systems to child abuse know that CACs and MO-NACA are the gold-standard prevention and response to all forms of child maltreatment. MO-NACA has a consistent, well-recognized brand and communications platform that support this vision. MO-NACA stays on the leading edge of trends in child maltreatment so that its member CACs, child abuse professionals and community members around the state can protect all children. As the organization continues to grow its work in the space of primary child abuse prevention, it hopes to build prevention networks and programs that are sustainably funded. MO-NACA's key stakeholders understand the organization's role in primary prevention efforts, and the primary prevention programming it builds is culturally responsive. The organization prioritizes developing authentic, bi-directional, and meaningful partnerships with diverse community organizations around the state to inform its programming and ensures that its values around diversity, equity inclusion and access are evident in its work. MO-NACA is creating a statewide prevention and response system where community members are empowered to support and protect children because the organization exists.

### **3. Public Policy and Legislative Advocacy**

MO-NACA envisions being seen as a leader among all parties invested in the health of children and families. Due to its leadership, policymakers will proactively come to the experts at MO-NACA when they need information, fostering partnerships that will lead to meaningful change in the state for children and families. The organization will remain a steadfast repository of information regarding child maltreatment so that, even when faced with significant outside pressure, policymakers will have a complete and truthful understanding about what child abuse is – and just as importantly,



what it is not – as they do their work. MO-NACA consistently develops a policy agenda in partnership with its member CACs and a diverse group of agency partners, organizations and people with critical lived-experience. It will regularly push for research-based policies and financial resources to support the critical work happening throughout the state.

#### **4. Professional Training and Certification**

MO-NACA envisions a network of child abuse professionals throughout the state that has seamless access to the kinds of training and information necessary to stay at the forefront of child abuse prevention and response. As the state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, MO-NACA's focused efforts on primary prevention is considered a core part of the development of an increasing number of professionals throughout the state. MO-NACA is the primary highly-trusted entity supporting CACs in meeting their National Children's Alliance Accreditation requirements, allowing accreditation to become incidental to the CAC's operations instead of a point of concern. MO-NACA continues building on its robust SAFE-CARE network, and its efforts lead to increased national recognition for the high-quality medical services offered in the state. MO-NACA also partners with other statewide training and technical assistance providers to ensure that MDTs receive the support they need to provide a high quality, coordinated response to child abuse.

#### **5. Internal Capacity and Development**

MO-NACA envisions an organization that supports its greatest asset- its staff- by centering respect and inclusion in its culture and investing in resource development while building structures to ensure sustainability in carrying out its programs. MO-NACA staff will have the space to pursue new professional development pathways and to be creative in how they will support the pursuit of the organization's mission and vision. New ideas will be demonstrably appreciated and celebrated. MO-NACA will invest in systems and structures that encourage collaborative efforts, ensuring that programming is not siloed. MO-NACA's programming and evaluation efforts will be circular and allow for maximum quality improvement. The organization pursues and regularly acquires impressive amounts of unrestricted funding so that it can truly meet the ever-evolving needs of its members, partners, and children and families throughout the state. The MO-NACA Board of Directors manages its own development, ensuring that the organization's governance structure is up to date and that the Board is led by a talented, diverse, and engaged group, capable of navigating significant growth and change.

### **Strategic Plan Framework**

After developing strong visions of change for the organization's priority focus areas, the planning group turned to identifying critical goals, objectives, and initiatives that will make up the stepping stones of its path moving forward. The ideas generated by the planning group have been structured for an annual planning timeline, meaning these goals and initiatives will take roughly a year to complete. Additional internal planning will be necessary to break down these goals and initiatives into manageable quarterly benchmarks.



OUR MISSION: TO EMPOWER ADULTS WITH SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN.

OUR VISION: A MISSOURI FREE OF CHILD ABUSE

## OUR PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

### PRIORITY FOCUS AREA 1: MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT AND NETWORKING

#### **3-year Outcome Challenge:**

MO-NACA envisions networks of child abuse prevention and response professionals who actively inform policy and practice statewide, and who are deeply invested in their own development and quality improvement. Missouri's child abuse prevention and response professionals readily come together for the greater good to collaborate on needed systems change. MO-NACA will work to be the most trusted provider of technical assistance to its members, ensuring that CACs seamlessly outpace their baseline requirements and operate consistently at the highest levels. MO-NACA promotes and supports meaningful peer networking throughout its child abuse prevention and response professional networks. It is committed to enhancing Multi-Disciplinary Team relationships and supporting CACs in that space. MO-NACA is capable of building peer networking structures that meet the evolving needs of child abuse professionals in the state.

#### **1-year goals and initiatives:**

- Build on current peer networking efforts and establish robust, regular opportunities for all disciplines working with member CACs to have structured networking time that improves practices statewide.
- Continue to build a network of community-based child sexual abuse prevention partners and provide technical assistance and training.
- Establish opportunities for child abuse prevention professionals, including those working in member CACs and those leading community-based prevention efforts to have structured networking time that informs a statewide child abuse prevention community with aligned strategies.
- Conduct assessment of the MO-NACA website's relevance to all child abuse prevention and response professionals
- Formally assess communications practices with membership and associated networks including executing improvements to website based on feedback from membership and partners.
- Ensure updated MO-NACA branding efforts are understood by CAC membership and associated networks through technical assistance visits or focus groups.
- Explore and implement technical assistance and peer networking strategies to increase the degree of diversity, equity, inclusion and access within child abuse prevention and response professionals, including child advocacy centers and MDTs across the state, including an assessment of need.
- Conduct an assessment of current membership levels and determine if additional membership categories would be helpful to aligning resources behind the MO-NACA mission and vision.
- Conduct a formal partnership landscape analysis to identify mission-aligned organizations and networks, evaluate current relationships and identify new pathways for partnership and collaborative effort.



## PRIORITY FOCUS AREA 2: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

### **3-year Outcome Challenge:**

MO-NACA envisions a state where adults not connected with the prevention and response systems to child abuse know that CACs and MO-NACA are the gold-standard prevention and response to all forms of child maltreatment. MO-NACA has a consistent, well-recognized brand and communications platform that support this vision. MO-NACA stays on the leading edge of trends in child maltreatment so that its member CACs, child abuse professionals and community members around the state can protect all children. As the organization continues to grow its work in the space of primary child abuse prevention, it hopes to build prevention networks and programs that are sustainably funded. MO-NACA's key stakeholders understand the organization's role in primary prevention efforts, and the primary prevention programming it builds is culturally responsive. The organization prioritizes developing authentic, bi-directional, and meaningful partnerships with diverse community organizations around the state to inform its programming and ensures that its values around diversity, equity inclusion and access are evident in its work. MO-NACA is creating a statewide prevention and response system where community members are empowered to support and protect children because the organization exists.

### **1-year goals and initiatives:**

- Release and implement full MO-NACA rebrand including updated website, materials and all other communications assets.
- Create a formal communications plan in line with new MO-NACA brand.
- Implement formal communications plan in line with new MO-NACA brand.
- Develop a multi-year plan for prevention and outreach growth and identify funding sources, creating a progressive funding strategy for MO-NACA prevention efforts.
- Develop funding sources, internal processes and timelines related to Child Abuse Prevention Month and the Standing with Children Awards.
- Implement statewide child sexual abuse prevention initiative.
- Respond to state partner and community requests for child abuse prevention and response resources, training and support.
- Expand MO-NACA's statewide public presence by delivering workshops, speaking at conferences, tabling at events, serving on coalitions and work groups and other opportunities to demonstrate expertise and leadership.
- Create a community engagement plan to build diverse and culturally responsive child abuse prevention and response messaging and programs.

## PRIORITY FOCUS AREA 3: POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

### **3-year Outcome Challenge:**

MO-NACA envisions being seen as a leader among all parties invested in the health of children and families. Due to its leadership, policymakers will proactively come to the experts at MO-NACA when they need information, fostering partnerships that will lead to meaningful change in the state for children and families. The organization will remain a steadfast repository of information regarding



child maltreatment so that, even when faced with significant outside pressure, policymakers will have a complete and truthful understanding about what child abuse is – and just as importantly, what it is not – as they do their work. MO-NACA consistently develops a policy agenda in partnership with its member CACs and a diverse group of agency partners, organizations and people with critical lived-experience. It will regularly push for research-based policies and financial resources to support the critical work happening throughout the state.

**1-year goals and initiatives:**

- Annually advance a legislative policy agenda informed by CAC membership that includes priorities to improve CAC and MDT response to child abuse, including the medical response
- Develop and advance a policy agenda that effectively integrates MO-NACA programming, research and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and access.
- Re-establish the statewide child abuse taskforce by securing membership commitments, convening and developing scope of work, including updating statutory authority.
- Develop and release a publicly-facing long-term child abuse prevention and response statewide report that is informed by the field and establish standing subcommittees that implement recommendations.
- Assess the opportunities and constraints of becoming a pass-through agency for state funding to CACs.
- MO-NACA is the statewide policy leader in child abuse response and prevention

**PRIORITY FOCUS AREA 4: PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

**3-year Outcome Challenge:**

MO-NACA envisions a network of child abuse professionals throughout the state that has seamless access to the kinds of training and information necessary to stay at the forefront of child abuse prevention and response. As the state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, MO-NACA’s focused efforts on primary prevention is considered a core part of the development of an increasing number of professionals throughout the state. MO-NACA is the primary highly-trusted entity supporting CACs in meeting their National Children’s Alliance Accreditation requirements, allowing accreditation to become incidental to the CAC’s operations instead of a point of concern. MO-NACA continues building on its robust SAFE-CARE network, and its efforts lead to increased national recognition for the high-quality medical services offered in the state. MO-NACA also partners with other statewide training and technical assistance providers to ensure that MDTs receive the support they need to provide a high quality, coordinated response to child abuse.

**1-year goals and initiatives:**

- Ensure established programs are meeting approved program outcomes
- Ensure established programs pursue innovation based on research, best practices and feedback from participants
- Support new programs with strategic planning and capacity building
- Evaluate new training programming opportunities, including trainings that prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion and access
- MO-NACA develops and adopts a formalized evaluation process that covers all programming.
- Professionalize the statewide child abuse response through the delivery of high-quality, community-responsive trainings that meets all accreditation and certification needs





- Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of adult-focused statewide primary child abuse prevention education
- Lead the implementation and improvement of statewide mandated reporter training
- Identify, prioritize, and implement opportunities for subject matter cross-training around the state (i.e. medical response for non-medical professionals, Forensic Interviewing 101 for non-interviewers, etc.)
- Develop a statewide strategy for child abuse professional recruitment and retention and address key pipeline issues.

## PRIORITY FOCUS AREA 5: INTERNAL CAPACITY AND DEVELOPMENT

### **3-year Outcome Challenge:**

MO-NACA envisions an organization that supports its greatest asset- its staff- by centering respect and inclusion in its culture and investing in resource development while building structures to ensure sustainability in carrying out its programs. MO-NACA staff will have the space to pursue new professional development pathways and to be creative in how they will support the pursuit of the organization's mission and vision. New ideas will be demonstrably appreciated and celebrated. MO-NACA will invest in systems and structures that encourage collaborative efforts, ensuring that programming is not siloed. MO-NACA's programming and evaluation efforts will be circular and allow for maximum quality improvement. The organization pursues and regularly acquires impressive amounts of unrestricted funding so that it can truly meet the ever-evolving needs of its members, partners, and children and families throughout the state. The MO-NACA Board of Directors manages its own development, ensuring that the organization's governance structure is up to date and that the Board is led by a talented, diverse, and engaged group, capable of navigating significant growth and change.

### **1-year goals and initiatives:**

- Create a formal fund development plan for the organization that prioritizes enhancing unrestricted and flexible funding for both MO-NACA and its member organizations.
- Adopt a retention plan for MO-NACA staff.
- Develop an ad hoc committee of the Board of Directors to review and revise bylaws and other governance documents.
- Create new and update existing employee personnel policies that are Board approved.
- Create internal standards for documentation and file storage and implement a new file sharing structure that meets the needs of staff and allows for efficient reporting to the Board of Directors and Funders
- Create and implement plan on investing resources in staff development
- Prioritize diversity in staffing and board membership
- Formally assess current and projected staffing needs, including executive administration, and plan for filling all gaps.
- Formally assess current and projected board needs, including desired skills and experience and demographics, and plan for filling all gaps.

