

SOC Meeting Summary for 7-15-25

Good afternoon,

Thank you everyone for such a wonderfully informative and impactful meeting! A special thank you to our wonderful guest speaker, **Kathleen Nolan from the Zero Abuse Project**. Today, our focus was on the prevention of child abuse, an always timely topic but especially given that children will soon return to school. Recognizing the signs of abuse or maltreatment and early intervention are critical and anything that we can do to prevent abuse in the first place, is essential.

The following is a summary of today's meeting. The recording link will be posted to the SOC's website sometime on July 16th.

1. Kathleen Nolan, Senior Attorney, "Zero Abuse Project."

Website: <https://zeroabuseproject.org/>

Email: kathleen.nolan@zeroabuseproject.org

- Kathleen led a 90-minute workshop that focused on the best practices for the prevention of child abuse with a focus on sexual abuse.
- The complete slide deck will be posted along with this summary to the SOC's website for reference.
- Briefly here summarizing the presentation:
 - Dispelling the myth that abuse cannot happen in some places.
 - Things that Youth Serving Organizations should know.
 - Things that offenders look for in potential victims.
 - Talked about grooming and manipulation.
 - Offenders are often not strangers to the child.
 - Some abuse will occur while others are present and not just in isolation.
 - Only 40% of cases of maltreatment are estimated to be reported meaning there is much more that goes unreported.
 - Obstacles to ending child abuse were discussed.
 - Poly-victimization was reviewed meaning not just that abuse can be repeated but can involve different kinds of abuse at once.
 - Screening questions for prospective employees.
 - What we can do to keep kids safe.
 - Sudden changes in behavior to watch for, changes in appearance.
 - The impact of abuse and neglect.
 - Social media and ways abusers can communicate with children.
 - Telling the differences between something nefarious versus something with no bad intentions.

2. Additional Resources Related to Today's Topic

- Children's Trust Fund: Missouri's Foundation for Child Abuse Prevention: <https://ctf4kids.org/>
- <https://preventchildabuse.org/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/child-abuse-neglect/prevention/index.html>
- <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/child-abuse-and-neglect/prevention-of-child-abuse-and-neglect/?srsltid=AfmBOorOyK3Zm8oJWR-8i42pz6u7pUMMgWuGiHODnQexC8tiCQsS95au>
- <https://mo-naca.org/programs/prevention-and-education/prevent-child-abuse-missouri/>

3. Information Provided by Other Members Before/After the Meeting:

- [Cooling Centers by State | NCHH](#)
 - [Disaster Tips – The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](#)
 - [BREAKING NEWS: Lawmakers Officially Reintroduce the Disaster Relief Medicaid Act – The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies](#)
 - [Beyond the Storm: How to Build a Recovery System That Pays Off | Live on 7/31 | OpenGov](#)
 - [Pop in at the Park: Budd Park - Kansas City Parks & Recreation](#)
 - [Bugs Extravaganza - Kansas City Parks & Recreation](#)
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Trauma, and Substance Abuse Training is on August 11th from 12-1:30, virtually, and is free. To get more information and to register, please go to: [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\), Trauma, and Substance Use Training - PreventEd](#).
4. The SOC is again able to assist with back to school needs. This may take a variety of forms such as with small fees, clothing, school supplies, etc. Please reach out to me (Jennifer.LHeureux@dmh.mo.gov) and I will be happy to assist you in whatever way that I can!
5. Our new mass email and meeting system will soon go live and may necessitate new meeting invitations. This new system will allow us to be able to securely communicate without being labeled as “spam.”

Our next meeting is on August 19th at 6 p.m. and will be in-person. This is a very special session in that it will be open to children and their families. The SOC has secured as a speaker, Zach Gowen. Zach is the only WWE and AEW signed wrestler ever to have wrestled in either circuit as a professional wrestler who is also, an amputee. Zach lost his leg to cancer when he was just eight years old. Now he is nationally recognized as a motivational speaker for children with disabilities. He has had to overcome stereotypes and obstacles to achieve his dream of being an athlete and wrestler. Many times, Zach was told that he could not do something, and he proved everyone wrong. You can watch some of his powerful videos on You Tube or learn more at: <https://coolspeak.com/youth-motivational-speakers/zach-gowen/>. The flyer and Event Brite registration will soon go out and be live. I am waiting for final word on the location! This is a **COMPLETELY FREE** event for children and families. The SOC has covered the fees associated with this event, entirely.

Thank you for everything that you do and for being a part of the SOC. Please never hesitate to reach out if there is anything that the SOC may do to help you in helping others!

Jennifer L. L'Heureux, Ph.D.

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