



# 2025 Leadership Summit HIGHLIGHTS

Hosted by the Alliance for HOPE International  
IN WASHINGTON D.C.



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## INTRODUCTION

**A**lliance for HOPE International's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Justice Center Leadership Summit was held in Washington, D.C. on March 4, 2025, with more than 80 Family Justice Center movement leaders from across the United States. They represented Family Justice Centers in 30 states. It was the first Leadership Summit ever held in Washington, D.C. and an inspiring day of sharing, visioning, and brainstorming. The one-day Leadership Summit meeting agenda is attached to this report.

Ken Shetter, Casey Gwinn, and Gael Strack welcomed the attendees as the Summit kicked off in the morning. They recognized the historic nature of the event and thanked all those who invested the time to be come to D.C.

The discussions over the course of the day covered important topics including Centers becoming a long-term community of care for survivors, children exposed to domestic violence, the lethal implications of strangulation assaults, the weaponization of parental alienation in family court, the overlooked reality of rising rates of domestic violence homicide, and the persistent challenge of funding and sustainability for Family Justice Centers across the country.

The first topic of the day focused on services for children exposed to domestic violence in Family Justice Centers and the need for comprehensive Camp HOPE America program in Centers.

"WE ARE MAKING HISTORY THIS WEEK HOLDING OUR LEADERSHIP SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. WE ARE GOING TO CREATE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS AND ASK CONGRESS TO PUT THEM IN FEDERAL LAW. WE ARE THE COLLABORATION PEOPLE. WE ARE THE HOMICIDE PREVENTION PEOPLE. NO OTHER NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS FOCUSED ON HOMICIDE PREVENTION. WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES RISING EVERYWHERE BUT IN FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS, WE MUST NOW ADVOCATE FOR FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS NATIONWIDE. THEY ARE THE PATHWAY TO REDUCING THE MURDERS OF WOMEN, MEN, AND CHILDREN ACROSS THE COUNTRY."

CASEY GWINN



LEADERSHIP SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



“

HOPE LIES IN DREAMS,  
IN IMAGINATION AND IN THE COURAGE  
OF THOSE WHO DARE MAKE DREAMS  
INTO REALITY.

DR. JONAS SALK



CHRISTINE NEELY, DENISE MCCAIN, CASEY GWINN, MARY CLAIRE LANDRY AND GAE STRACK

## DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

“EVERY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER IN AMERICA NEEDS A COMPREHENSIVE CHILDREN’S PROGRAM AND EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES TO PROVE WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN. EVERY CENTER SHOULD HAVE A CAMP HOPE AMERICA AFFILIATED PROGRAM AND YEAR-ROUND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH.”

KEN SHETTER

Ken Shetter introduced the topic of children exposed to domestic violence and took some time to talk about the complexity of addressing the needs of children and youth impacted by domestic violence and related child abuse.

Casey Gwinn talked about the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study and how unmitigated trauma plays itself out in the lives of childhood trauma survivors. Most of the Centers represented at the Summit have [Camp HOPE America](#) programs but many others still do not. There was a great discussion about various intervention programs focused on children in Centers including Fort Worth’s “[Handle with Care](#)” program, a therapeutic Pre-K Program at the Gulf Coast Center for Non-Violence in Mississippi, and a prevention program with children at [New Star Family Justice Center](#) in California. The [Nashville Family Safety Center](#) shared a pilot program they have with Department of Children’s Services (DCS) that includes Family Justice Center advocates co-located with DCS.

There was a strong consensus that all Family Justice Centers should be focused on developing comprehensive programs for youth impacted by domestic violence. At Family Justice Centers across the country, we are increasingly recognizing that healing for survivors must include intentional, year-round services for their children. The days of siloed services—one for the non-offending parent and a separate, often underdeveloped pathway for children—are behind us. Why? Because exposure to violence is not a neutral event. It alters a child’s neurobiology, disrupts developmental milestones, and can initiate a lifelong cycle of trauma unless interrupted by coordinated, hope-centered interventions.

The discussion included children’s experiences with polyvictimization—multiple forms of trauma that compound over time. It’s not just about what happened last week or last night. It’s about understanding the child’s entire trauma narrative. This means we must develop systems that treat children’s experiences with the same level of care, urgency, and strategic investment as we do adult survivors.

During the discussion on children and youth, the [Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence](#) shared about their Therapeutic Preschool Program called “[The Incredible Years](#).” The program is designed to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children aged 3 to 5 who have experienced exposure to domestic violence or have been sexually abused. Recognizing the profound impact that such traumatic experiences can have on young children, the program aims to support their emotional, social, and cognitive development through a structured and therapeutic approach.



KEN SHETTER PRESENTING



## ETHAN AND CAMP HOPE AMERICA

The highlight of the discussion about Camp HOPE America and children's programs was Deb Greenwood from the [Center for Family Justice](#) in Bridgeport sharing the story of Ethan, one of her amazing Camp HOPE America campers. The Center has been doing Camp HOPE America for ten years. Ethan began attending Camp HOPE in 9<sup>th</sup> grade soon after his mother came to the Center for Family Justice for safety and support. They had no heat in their house. Ethan's mom was badly beaten, and Ethan had been forced to be "the man of the house" at a very young age. He was quiet and withdrawn when he first attended camp. But he started coming out of his shell at camp and began to realize he could be a leader and help others. During COVID, Ethan gathered food from local food banks and delivered it to the homes of Camp HOPE America - Connecticut families with a sign saying, "Hope is Not Canceled." As he finished high school, he began to talk about becoming a lawyer to help women like his mom. He worked two jobs through high school and ended up getting a full ride to college. This year he graduated from college and scored in the top 5% nationally on the LSAT (pre-law school test). He begins law school this fall and said his goal is clear: "I want to be the first Camp HOPE America kid to become the governor of Connecticut!"

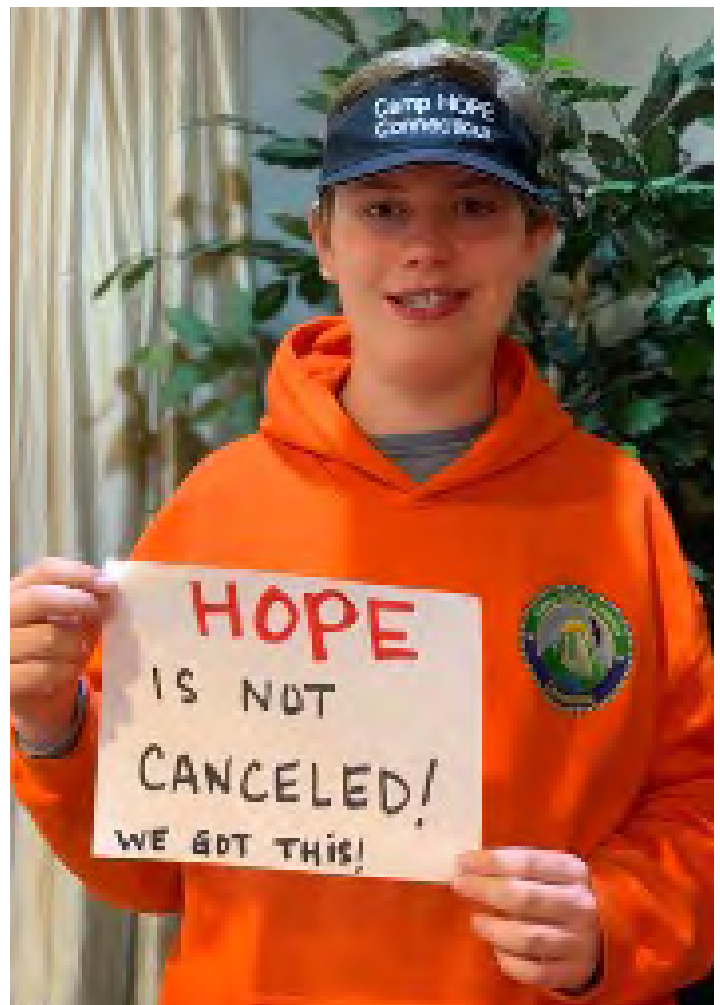


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"I WANT TO BE THE FIRST  
CAMP HOPE AMERICA KID  
TO BECOME THE GOVERNOR  
OF CONNECTICUT!"

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ETHAN



ETHAN

## STRANGULATION ASSAULTS

Casey Gwinn and Gael Strack then initiated a discussion on the importance of Family Justice Centers focusing on handling strangulation assaults. Casey and Gael reiterated the research that men who strangle women are the most dangerous men on the planet, including noting that **if a woman is strangled one time, she is 750% more likely to be murdered by that partner.** They challenged every Family Justice Center to work on developing a county-wide strangulation protocol providing direction to all professionals working with victims of non-fatal and near-fatal strangulation assault.

Casey Gwinn said the research is clear that Family Justice Centers with a focus on holding stranglers accountable produce the lowest per capita homicide rates for women in the United States. He cited San Diego City and County as having the lowest domestic violence homicide rates in the country today with two Family Justice Centers open, a third about to open, and a District Attorney's Office focused on treating strangulation assaults as serious felonies as strong reasons for the consistently lower homicides in San Diego over the last two decades.

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"STRANGULATION IS THE CALLING CARD OF A KILLER. AND IF WE ARE GOING TO REDUCE HOMICIDES WE MUST STOP MEN WHO STRANGLE WOMEN BEFORE THEY KILL."

GAEL STRACK

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Casey and Gael challenged all Family Justice Centers to develop expertise in the handling of strangulation assaults and ensure strangulation cases get treated seriously. They encouraged everyone to send people to the Alliance's regularly scheduled Advanced Course on Strangulation Prevention and recommended joining the mailing list for the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention to stay up to date on trainings.

San Diego County Chief Deputy District Attorney Tracy Prior shared more about the ongoing drop in domestic violence homicides in San Diego County and gave credit to the Family Justice Center framework and their [San Diego County Strangulation Protocol](#).

"OUR STRANGULATION PROTOCOL CREATED A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO THE MOST DANGEROUS OFFENDERS AND PUSHED DOWN HOMICIDES ANOTHER 32%. EVERY COMMUNITY SHOULD HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE PROTOCOL, AND WE WILL SHARE OURS WITH ANYONE. WE NOW HAVE SEVEN YEARS OF DATA, SO WE KNOW IT HAS MATTERED."

CHIEF DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY TRACY PRIOR



SPENCER MERRIWEATHER AND TRACY PRIOR



# STRANGULATION AWARENESS

Gael and Casey also sought to raise awareness about sexual choking or what is sometimes called erotic asphyxia. They talked about the powerful social norming of strangulation during sex. The current research is establishing that **63% of all college-age women are experiencing strangulation during sex**. Directors asked to be sent the current research on the stunning prevalence rate of sexual choking particularly in young people. [The Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention](#) is seeking funding to develop a national awareness campaign.

Casey and Gael also led a discussion on the Alliance's focus on suspicious death cases where women die after a history of domestic violence. They shared some of their recent case work and profiled the first Suspicious Death law in the country just passed in California, SB 989, [Joanna's Law](#). Joanna's Law is based on the murder of Joanna Hunter in Solano County, California in 2011. Her death was quickly ruled a suicide without any comprehensive investigation ever being conducted. Casey and Gael praised the [Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center](#) for their work supporting Joanna's mother and brother and their advocacy for Joanna's Law. They also praised the [Nashville Family Safety Center](#) and their recent participation in the Alliance's Hidden Homicides Course. Becky Bullard and her team are now trained to evaluate suspicious death cases and helped solve a murder case in Nashville which was originally ruled a suicide but later found to be a homicide.

The entire group had a robust discussion about ways Family Justice Centers can develop teams to help evaluate death cases where there is a prior history of domestic violence. [One Safe Place in Fort Worth](#) and the [Rockford Family Peace Center](#) both shared about their focus on strangulation assaults and the importance of understanding strangulation to be able to evaluate staged crime scene homicides where the victim is strangled to death and then the scene is staged to look like a suicide by hanging.

Gael strongly encouraged Family Justice Centers to send teams to [Hidden Homicides: Overcoming the Challenges of Staged Crime Scenes](#) in Estes Park, Colorado in September. Many Center Directors talked about their work to train local professionals on the handling of strangulation cases as a high priority strategy to reduce homicides. Phyllis Yonta shared about the New Jersey Attorney General's [BREATHE Initiative](#) focused on making sure forensic nurse examiners are available to do forensic exams in strangulation cases across the state.

After a lunch break, the Summit focused on three topics for discussion: **Parental Alienation being used to protect abusers in Family Court; the importance of Homicide Prevention strategies in Family Justice Centers; and Funding and Sustainability.**



CATHERINE JOHNSON, GAE STRACK,  
MICHELLE FRASER AND MARIE KENNY



EDWARD STOCKINGER, SONYA ALLEN  
AND LAUREN MCAULEY



DANA FILKOWSKI, SUSUN KIM  
AND TRACY PRIOR



# PARENTAL ALIENATION

In Family Justice Centers nationwide, the most urgent, least visible crisis facing survivors of domestic violence today is not always the abuse itself—**it is what happens in family court**. The concept of parental alienation is increasingly being used, often without scientific basis, to discredit protective parents—primarily mothers—who are trying to shield their children from continued harm.

At its core, **parental alienation is being weaponized** in ways that jeopardize child safety and silence survivor voices. While survivors escape physical danger, many walk directly into a courtroom that views their efforts to protect their children as a form of manipulation. **Judges are finding survivors “liable” for alienation** simply because they express concern about the abusive parent’s influence, or because children are fearful or resistant to have contact with the abusive parent. This dynamic turns abuse victims into the “accused,” **forcing them to defend their credibility rather than protect their children**.

Many Directors felt this was not just a legal misstep—but a **systemic failure**.

- **Survivors are losing custody** or being forced into shared custody with abusers.
- **Children’s disclosures are dismissed** as “coached.”
- **Therapists and reunification camps** are sometimes introduced with the goal of repairing relationships with abusive parents, rather than honoring children’s trauma-informed resistance.
- In states like Oregon, proposed legislation on parental alienation has gained national attention, raising concerns about **politically driven narratives overriding trauma-informed science**.

Family court, as many survivors and VOICES chapters report, has become a battleground dominated by misinformation, outdated judicial training, and a lack of trauma-informed protocols. This is not just an issue of law—it is a **public health crisis**. Experts like Dr. Christine Cocchiola are leading the charge in reframing these cases through the lens of coercive control—a more accurate, evidence-based understanding of the patterns of manipulation that characterize many abusive relationships. For more information, visit [coercivecontrolconsulting.com](http://coercivecontrolconsulting.com).

In some jurisdictions, positive shifts are emerging:

- The [RedBud Blossom Family Justice Center](#) team talked about leveraging the [Georgia Crime Victims’ Bill of Rights](#) and [Marsy’s Law](#) to protect survivor-parents and their children.
- Casey Gwinn talked about the importance of prosecutor’s filing child endangerment charges when domestic violence occurs in the presence of children. He shared the strategies employed during his career as a prosecutor and the protective impact on children by reducing the likelihood of 50/50 custody once the abuser was convicted of child endangerment.
- Multiple Directors raised the importance of using simple tools for judges outlining trauma-informed practices and red flags of coercive control, have shown promise in judicial education.

## ADDRESSING THE NEED

As leaders in the movement, many Directors felt Family Justice Centers must become the voice of reform in family court. The civil court system is, in the words of multiple [VOICES](#) members, the most dangerous and least equipped space survivors enter. There was a strong consensus that this is where our collective advocacy must focus next.

## KEY ACTION STEPS

- **Ensure that no survivor goes to court alone.** Family Justice Centers must provide or partner for legal advocacy, court accompaniment, and limited or full representation for survivors.
- **Educate judges, Guardian ad Litem and other court professionals** using tools like bench cards, training grounded in coercive control frameworks, and survivor experiences.
- **Track and report outcomes.** Document how courts are ruling in alienation claims involving survivors and publicize the problems.
- **Amplify survivor voices.** Support groups like [Moms Fight Back](#) and connect survivors to platforms where they can influence policy and practice.
- Advocate for legislation like [Ethan’s Law](#) and [Brodie’s Law](#)—efforts that center child safety and the rights of protective parents.
- Collaborate with national experts to shape policy, offer expert witness testimony, and push back against pseudoscience in family court.

# HOMICIDE PREVENTION

“FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES. NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE KNOW THAT. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES ARE PREDICTABLE, AND IF SOMETHING IS PREDICTABLE, IT IS PREVENTABLE. IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF RESOURCES AND PRIORITIES”

CASEY GWINN

Domestic violence homicide is not random. It is predictable. It is preventable. And across the country, **Family Justice Centers (FJC)s are quietly doing what few systems have successfully accomplished: interrupting the homicide timeline.** But here’s the problem—most people don’t know it.

The Family Justice Center model is one of the most effective multidisciplinary responses to high-risk domestic violence cases ever developed. Survivors connected to a Family Justice Center are **less likely to be killed, more likely to access comprehensive help early, and more likely to be believed and supported by a team instead of isolated in the system.**

## ADDRESSING THE NEED

**Message around homicide prevention.** Train and educate your community. Survivors who end up murdered almost always showed **multiple known risk indicators** before their deaths:

- **Prior strangulation assaults**
- **Stalking**
- **Escalating threats**
- **Recent separation**
- **Firearms in the home**

Many agreed that Family Justice Centers are uniquely positioned to **identify and act on these risk markers early**, thanks to cross-agency collaboration between law enforcement, advocates, healthcare, prosecution, and housing—all under one roof. This unified approach means:

- **Faster risk assessment and safety planning**
- **Immediate documentation of high-risk behaviors**
- **Rapid connection to resources**
- **More informed legal and medical response**

Despite the data, public and political awareness remains alarmingly low about the connection between strangulation, stalking, and homicide.

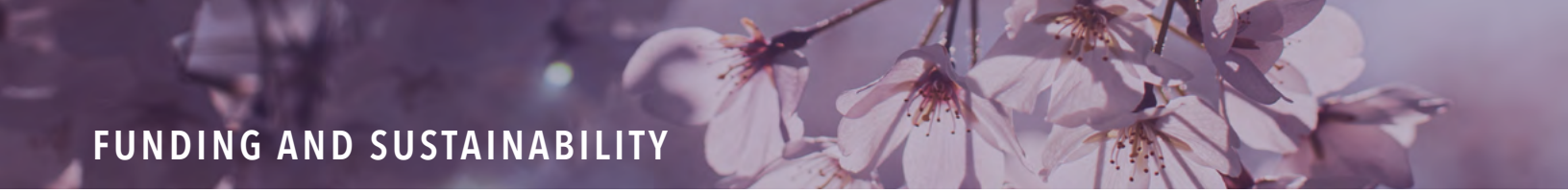
- **Domestic violence homicide prevention isn’t seen as a systems issue**—it’s still viewed as a tragic inevitability. Many agreed that Family Justice Centers must challenge this nihilism. Casey Gwinn said it clearly: **“Domestic violence homicides are predictable. If something is predictable, it is preventable. It is only a question of resources and priorities.”**
- **We are not telling our story loudly enough.** Media, lawmakers, and even local funders often don’t understand that Family Justice Centers do what public safety reformers claim they want: trauma-informed, community-based, upstream intervention.
- There was a strong consensus that we must become **relentless in our messaging**: If you want to reduce domestic violence homicides, you must fund and expand Family Justice Centers. Family Justice Centers are an effective homicide reduction and prevention strategy.

## ACTION STEPS TO ELEVATE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER IMPACT

To shift the narrative and save more lives, we must:

- **Educate city councils, state legislators, and members of Congress** that Family Justice Centers are homicide prevention tools—not just service hubs or “one stop shops.” Casey Gwinn talked about how the phrase “one stop shop” minimizes the power of wraparound services and the creation of a community for survivors to belong to long after the crisis.
- **Track local domestic violence homicides** and map survivor touchpoints to illustrate where Family Justice Centers could have made a difference.
- **Collect and share survivor stories and Family Justice Center outcomes data** where coordinated services prevented escalation. All attendees received a copy of the latest [Family Justice Center Framework Impact and Outcomes Report](#).
- **Train law enforcement and judicial partners** to understand strangulation, coercive control, and homicide risk through a multidisciplinary lens.





## FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The last focus of the day was on funding and sustainability for Family Justice Centers. Everyone agrees that starting and sustaining a Family Justice Center is not for the faint of heart. The vision is bold—co-located, multidisciplinary support for survivors and their children—but the path to financial stability is often steep, uneven, and politically unpredictable. While countless leaders across the country have demonstrated it can be done, it's equally true that **many Family Justice Centers struggle to secure consistent and adequate funding**, especially beyond the startup phase.

At the federal level, **there is broad bipartisan recognition** that services for survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking are essential. The Family Justice Center model aligns with both public safety and public health priorities—two areas both sides of the aisle can support. Family Justice Centers generally gain strong bi-partisan support at the local, state, and federal level.

However, in practice:

- **Federal grant funding is competitive and cyclical.**
- Current federal priorities under the **Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)** continue to focus heavily on housing, civil legal services, culturally relevant services, and now, restorative justice—all relevant to Family Justice Centers—but often not with funding earmarked specifically for Family Justice Centers.
- **The Family Justice Center framework lacks a permanent line item or dedicated program funding in the federal budget.** Each funding cycle requires new advocacy, often with no guarantees.

There was a discussion about the need to create a **Congressional Family Justice Center Caucus**, spearheaded by Alliance for HOPE International, to increase awareness about the power of the Family Justice Center framework, but it is still early in that journey. Ken Shetter said it, **"We are not yet where we need to be.** We do not have the support we need." Gael Strack talked about the ongoing challenge of providing vital services while still trying to build the movement, **"We're building the plane while we are flying it."**

### ADDRESSING THE NEED

Building and sustaining a Family Justice Center is not just about architecture—**it's about architecting trust, equity, and safety** in our communities. But even the most visionary models can stall without the right funding strategies. Across the nation, Family Justice Centers are discovering that **sustainability is about more than dollars—it's about partnerships, persistence, and purpose.**

Mecklenburg County District Attorney Spencer Merriweather and Safe Alliance CEO Laura Lawrence talked about their vision for The Umbrella Center in Charlotte and the unprecedented **\$10 million** in funding—**\$5 million from the county, \$5 million from the City of Charlotte** that began their journey toward raising more than \$40 million. But that didn't happen in isolation. **Community foundations were hesitant—until city and county leadership stepped up.** Once public officials signaled commitment, private and corporate dollars began to flow.

"NORTH CAROLINA HAS BEEN BEHIND IN ADDRESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC SAFETY BUT NOW WE ARE CATCHING UP. CHARLOTTE IS A PLACE WITH A MAJOR CORPORATE FOOTPRINT, AND WE ARE ENGAGING THEM TO SEE THAT FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS ARE A SOLUTION TO HOMICIDES AND PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS."

DISTRICT ATTORNEY SPENCER MERRIWEATHER

From there, the capital campaign in Mecklenburg County grew under the leadership of [Safe Alliance](#).

- **Corporations became unexpected champions**, stepping up to fund what they saw as a direct investment in the health and safety of their workforce and community.
- **New Market Tax Credits** contributed \$1.8 million, providing a powerful but complex financing tool—never navigate it alone; hire consultants and legal support.

[The Umbrella Center](#) is now one of the largest Family Justice Center frameworks under construction in the country. Casey Gwinn also highlighted Kim Garrett's leadership at [Palomar: OKC's Family Justice Center](#) and Suzann Stewart's leadership at the [Family Safety Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma](#) as two other examples of major capital campaigns developed with both public and private support that are now under construction, building dynamic Family Justice Center campuses. He cited San Diego County as an example of a community with primarily local government funding but a massive vision to build four Family Justice Centers to serve the whole county thanks to the leadership of San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan and Chief Deputy District Attorney Tracy Prior.

Angela McGraw shared the journey toward their [Forest of HOPE Family Justice Center](#) in **Little Rock, Arkansas**. She said a successful blend of **public, state, and federal support** included:

- \$1 million from the County
- \$500k from each of two Attorneys General (past and present)
- A \$4 million matching grant
- \$7 million from [HOME-ARP](#) (supportive services, operating expense, non-congregate shelter)
- And a pending private capital campaign

#### **TAKEAWAY: Don't wait to be fully ready to ask—momentum funds momentum.**

Casey Gwinn talked about the length of time it takes **cultivate major donors (12-18 months)**, especially those unfamiliar with the Family Justice Center model. But once they understand the impact—saving lives, keeping families safe, and preventing cycles of trauma—the investment of private foundations and individual philanthropists often grows dramatically.

Multiple Directors talked about the challenge of raising money for pressing needs such as civil legal services. Casey Gwinn recommended that every grant application should include a **legal services line item**. Civil legal support is one of the most effective interventions for survivor safety and long-term stability, but most funders don't fund those services unless they are incidental to funding other programs and activities.

#### **FUNDING THROUGH GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH CHANNELS**

Family Justice Centers are increasingly tapping into **unconventional public funding sources**:

- Diane Lance talked about how in **Nashville**, city departments now **allocate budget lines to support nonprofits working in the Family Justice Center**, recognizing the Family Justice Center's role in crime reduction, public health, and homelessness prevention.
- Regina McDevitt talked about how in **Chattanooga**, the County provides base funding, but is now **leveraging municipal buy-in**—with County Commissioners going city by city to request funding to support the county-wide work of the Center.
- Other Directors talked about the need to look for new strategies such as **obtaining funding from managed care Medicaid providers**, in many states, who are **required to reinvest surplus dollars back into the community**—often called reinvestment funds. These funds can support mental health services, trauma recovery, and housing supports within a Family Justice Center.



CASEY GWINN AND DIANE LANCE



## SUSTAINING THE MISSION: ADVOCACY + ACCOUNTABILITY

Casey Gwinn talked about the ability of local elected officials to help raise private money for Family Justice Centers because the Family Justice Center is **“the public health and public safety collaborative”** in the community and these focus areas are the highest priority of local government. Elected officials can raise money for you—if you let them. **It is not a “gift of public funds” or an inappropriate favoring of one non-profit over another.** Many Directors shared their strategy to build relationships with local elected officials. Rockford Mayor Thomas McNamara shared how he was recruited into the Family Justice Center movement by Jennifer Cacciapaglia.

“ELECTED OFFICIALS EVERYWHERE NEED TO BE RECRUITED INTO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORK AND NEED TO BE CHALLENGED TO CREATE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS. I WAS RECRUITED BY JENNIFER CACCIAPAGLIA IN ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS THE ROCKFORD FAMILY PEACE CENTER IS A STATEWIDE MODEL FOR ILLINOIS.”

MAYOR THOMAS MCNAMARA

Family Justice Centers must also embrace sustainability as a **collective discipline** and ongoing priority. There was discussion about the importance of not relying on a single federal grant to fund a Center. The strongest Centers never rely on one funding stream. And the strongest Centers seem to evolve and grow regularly.

Mary Claire Landry, the Director of the [New Orleans Family Justice Center](#) challenged everyone to think about how to keep evolving to meet the emerging needs in local communities. She shared her journey to create the [HOPE Community Clinic](#), to provide both forensic and primary health care services at the Family Justice Center.

“OUR FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER HAS BECOME A BEACON FOR THE COMMUNITY NOW TO HELP ADDRESS NATURAL DISASTERS, MASS SHOOTINGS, AND OTHER CRISES. EVERY CENTER CAN DO THIS.”

MARY CLAIRE LANDRY



CASEY GWINN PRESENTING



LIBBY NEURTER, MARY CLAIRE LANDRY AND ELENA MELONI



## CONCLUSION

The one-day Leadership Summit wrapped up with a discussion about the rapid growth of the Family Justice Center movement and the powerful outcomes in Centers now being documented across the country and around the world. All attendees received a copy of the updated [Family Justice Center Framework Impact and Outcomes Report](#). There was strong consensus that everything happening in Centers must be documented and shared to demonstrate the lifesaving, hopegiving outcomes occurring every day in Family Justice Centers across the country.



SPENCER MERRIWEATHER, LAURA LAWRENCE  
AND CATHERINE JOHNSON



CASEY GWINN AND GAELE STRACK



CATHERINE JOHNSON AND MARY CLAIRE LANDRY





# 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

March 4, 2025

## TUESDAY, MARCH 4

8:30AM	Registration and Networking
9:00AM	Welcome and Opening Remarks: Casey Gwinn, Gael Strack, Ken Shetter
9:15AM	Morning Discussion
10:15AM	Break
10:30AM	Developing Comprehensive Services for Children
11:15AM	Strangulation Assaults
12:00PM	Networking Lunch - on your own
1:30PM	Director-Guided Discussion
2:00PM	Homicide Prevention
3:00PM	Funding and Sustainability
4:00PM	Looking Forward

# LIST OF ATTENDEES

CRAWFORD DOWNS One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center	Michelle Fraser 14th Circuit Victim Services Center	DENISE MCCAIN Prince George's County Family Justice Center	RACHEL SCHUTZ Family Justice Center of Washington County
SUSAN EVANS One Place Family Justice Center	Lane Grayson The Heights Ellis County Family Resources	REGINA MCDEVITT Chattanooga Hamilton County Family Justice Center	ELLEN SCHWARTZ Women Aware Inc
SONYA ALLEN Cobb Family Advocacy Center	Debra Greenwood The Center for Family Justice	ANGELA MCGRAW Forest of Hope Family Peace Center	KENNETH SHETTER One Safe Place, Tarrant County Texas
MARK ANTONINI The Center for Family Justice	Casey Gwinn Alliance for HOPE International	THOMAS MCNAMARA Family Peace Center	KIMBERLY STANLEY Stark County Prosecutor's Office
MARIA BETANZOS Women Aware Inc	LaKese Hicks Forest of Hope Family Peace Center	REBECCA MCWILLIAMS One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center	SUMMER STEPHAN North County Family Justice Center, One Safe Place
BRANDON BOWLES PorchLight, A Family Justice Center	Louie Hunter Cobb Family Advocacy Center	ELENA MELONI New Star Family Justice Center	SUZANN STEWART Family Safety Center
DEBRA BRIDGES Family Justice Center of Yamhill County	Susan Huter Safelight Inc.	Spencer Merriweather The Umbrella Center	EDWARD STOCKINGER Cobb Family Advocacy Center
ANDEN BULL Palomar	Catherine Johnson Guilford County Family Justice Center	MICHELLE MORGAN One Safe Place, Tarrant County Texas	KYLE STONE Stark County Prosecutor's Office
DIANE BURGIS Contra Costa/Solano	Sarah Jones Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence	CHRISTINE NEELY Prince George's County Family Justice Center	GAEL STRACK Alliance for HOPE International
JENNIFER CACCIAPAGLIA Family Peace Center	Marie Kenny The Center for Safe Futures	LIBBY NEUNER Delaware Family Justice Center	JEANNIE STROHMEYER Nampa Family Justice Center
VANESSA CAMPUSANO Alameda County Family Violence Center	SUSUN KIM Solano and Contra Costa Family Justice Centers	ANA OCKERT One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center	ESPERINA STUBBLEFIELD Hope Family Justice Center
ANDREA CARLSON Family Peace Center - Rockford	DIANE LANCE Metro Office of Family Safety	CARMEN PITRE Sojourner Family Peace Center	SKYE SULLIVAN Family Justice Center of Alamance County
GEM (PATTI) CHILDERS Chattanooga Hamilton County Family Justice Center	MARY CLAIRE LANDRY New Orleans Family Justice Center	TRACY PRIOR North County Family Justice Center, One Safe Place	JAY TRULL The Heights Ellis County
CANDACE COOLEDGE PorchLight, A Family Justice Center	LAURA LAWRENCE Survivor Resource Center, Charlotte, NC	STACEY RILEY Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence	MONTGOMERY TURNER-LITTLE Alliance for HOPE
KARLA ELIAS-FLORES Alameda County Family Justice Center	TONI LEETH One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center	STEPHANIE RIVERA Contra Costa/Solano	KATHERINE VERANO The Center for Safe Futures
MELISSA ERLBAUM A Safe Place Family Justice Center for Clackamas County	NICOLE LOPEZ PorchLight, A Family Justice Center	CRAIG ROBERTS Crystal Judson Family Justice Center	JOHN WENTWORTH A Safe Place, Clackamas County, Oregon
TRICIA EVEREST Palomar	GARY MACNAMARA The Center for Family Justice	RACHEL RODRIGUEZ Rose Andom Center	LAUREN WILKIE Safelight Inc.
MICHELE FARHAT Monarch Justice Center	LISA MANTARRO MOORE Stanislaus Family Justice Center	ERIN SABERI Erin Saberi Co.	ADAM WOOD The Center for Family Justice
JENNIFER FERRANTE The Center for Family Justice	RUSSELL MARK Family Justice Center of Yamhill County	JENNIFER SALZMAN The Heights Ellis County	PHYLLIS YONTA Women Aware Inc
DANA FILKOWSKI Contra Costa/Solano Family Justice Center	LAUREN MCAULEY RedBud Blossom Family Advocacy Center		



## AFFILIATED FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

**ONE PLACE  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
MONTGOMERY, AL

**ONE PLACE METRO ALABAMA  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BIRMINGHAM, AL

**FOREST OF HOPE  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
LITTLE ROCK, AR

**MONARCH JUSTICE CENTER**  
NAPA, CA

**ONE SAFE PLACE - THE NORTH  
COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SAN MARCOS, CA

**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
STOCKTON, CA

**ALAMEDA COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
OAKLAND, CA

**SANTA ANA  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SANTA ANA, CA

**STRENGTH UNITED  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
VAN NUYS, CA

**CONTRA COSTA  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER CENTRAL**  
CONCORD, CA

**CONTRA COSTA  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER EAST**  
ANTIOCH, CA

**CONTRA COSTA FAMILY JUSTICE  
CENTER WEST RICHMOND, CA**

**FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
SONOMA COUNTY**  
SANTA ROSA, CA

**NEW STAR  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
HAWTHORNE, CA

**ONE SAFE PLACE**  
REDDING, CA

**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SACRAMENTO, CA

**YOUR SAFE PLACE**  
SAN DIEGO, CA

**STANISLAUS  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
MODESTO, CA

**VENTURA COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
VENTURA, CA / OXNARD, CA

**PORCHLIGHT,  
A FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
LAKEWOOD, CO

**ROSE ANDOM CENTER**  
DENVER, CO

**THE CENTER FOR SAFE FUTURES**  
NEW LONDON, CT

**HOPE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
OF GREATER NEW HAVEN**  
NEW HAVEN, CT

**THE CENTER FOR FAMILY JUSTICE**  
BRIDGEPORT, CT

**CASA PINELLAS  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
PINELLAS COUNTY, FL

**NAMPA FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
NAMPA, ID

**FAMILY PEACE CENTER**  
ROCKFORD, IL

**FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
OF ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**  
SOUTH BEND, IN

**NORTHWEST LOUISIANA  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BOSSIER CITY, LA

**FAITH HOUSE**  
LAFAYETTE, LA

**FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
OF CENTRAL LOUISIANA**  
PINEVILLE, LA

**NEW ORLEANS  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
NEW ORLEANS, LA

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
UPPER MARLBORO, MD

**DEE KENNEDY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BOSTON, MA

**GREENE COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SPRINGFIELD, MO

**GULF COAST  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BILOXI, MS

**NORTHERN LIGHTS  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BILLINGS, MT

**SURVIVOR RESOURCE CENTER**  
CHARLOTTE, NC

**FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
OF ALAMANCE COUNTY**  
BURLINGTON, NC

**BUNCOMBE COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
ASHEVILLE, NC

**GUILFORD COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
GREENSBORO, NC

**SAFELIGHT**  
HENDERSONVILLE, NC

**GUILFORD COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
HIGH POINT, NC

**STRAFFORD COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
ROCHESTER, NH

**TRI-COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
LAS VEGAS, NM

**ESSEX COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
NEWARK, NJ

**NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
THE BRONX, NY

**NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
BROOKLYN, NY

**NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
MANHATTAN, NEW YORK, NY

**NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
QUEENS, KEW GARDENS, NY

**NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
STATEN ISLAND, NY

**WILLOW  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTER**  
ROCHESTER, NY

**CARDINAL POINT  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
EL RENO, OK

**FAMILY SAFETY CENTER**  
TULSA, OK

**PALOMAR: OKLAHOMA CITY'S  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

**SAFE CENTRE OF PEEL**  
PEEL, ONTARIO

**YORK REGION CENTRE  
FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY**  
MARKHAM, ONTARIO

**A SAFE PLACE  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
FOR CLACKAMAS COUNTY**  
OREGON CITY, OR

**FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY**  
BEAVERTON, OR

**14TH CIRCUIT  
VICTIM SERVICES CENTER**  
OKATIE, SC

**HAMILTON COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
CHATTANOOGA, TN

**METRO NASHVILLE  
FAMILY SAFETY CENTER**  
NASHVILLE, TN

**JEAN CROWE ADVOCACY CENTER**  
NASHVILLE, TN

**BEXAR COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

**ONE SAFE PLACE**  
FT. WORTH, TX / GRAPEVINE, TX

**THE HEIGHTS FAMILY RESOURCES**  
MIDLOTHIAN, TX / WAXAHACHIE, TX

**CRYSTAL JUDSON  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
TACOMA, WA

**THURSTON COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
OLYMPIA, WA

**SAYU X WEY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SEQUIM, WA

**SPOKANE  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**  
SPOKANE, WA

**SOJOURNER  
FAMILY PEACE CENTER**  
MILWAUKEE, WI



[familyjusticecenter.org](http://familyjusticecenter.org) | [allianceforhope.org](http://allianceforhope.org) | (888) 511-3522

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