

Learn more about what we've been up to...

- **CCADV Participates in Family Court Forum**
- **Save the Date! 9th Annual First 100 Plus Breakfast & Awards Ceremony 11.15.19**
- **CCADV to Launch Safe Connect November 2019**
- **Meet Our Newest Staff!**
- **CCADV Hosts National Experts**
- **2019 Legislative Session Summary**
- **CCFV Conference Wrap-Up**



CCADV Participates in Family Court Informational Forum

In July, State Senators Mae Flexer (D-Danielson), Gary Winfield (D-New Haven) and Alex Bergstein (D-Greenwich) hosted an informational forum on domestic violence in the context of the family court. **CCADV CEO, Karen Jarmoc, was invited to speak on the panel.** Other panelists included:

- Judge Michael Albis, Chief Administrative Judge for Family Matters, CT Judicial Branch
- Joe DiTunno, Deputy Director, Court Support Services Division, CT Judicial Branch
- Joan Meier, JD, Founder & Legal Director of the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, George Washington University Law School
- Suzanne A., survivor
- Attorneys Justine Rakich-Kelly and Margaret Bozek of the Children's Law Center of CT
- Attorney Lorraine Carcova, Managing Attorney, Family Law Unit, CT Legal Services



CCADV pointed out that many survivors struggle with divorce and custody issues in the family court. At its core, domestic violence is an imbalance of power and just because the relationship ends, it doesn't mean that the attempts to exert power and control end. When family court stakeholders fail to take this into account and fail to treat cases with domestic violence differently than cases where each parent has equal power in the relationship, it can result in the court becoming another tool by which the abuser harasses the victim.

CCADV offered several simple suggestions for strengthening the family court's response to survivors:

- Improved cross-systems training including judges, family relations counselors, attorneys and advocates
- Create consistency across courts in allowing a domestic violence advocate to stand with a survivor in court – must consider this in the context of supporting the survivor to feel safe and in the context of Limited-English Proficiency
- Ensure each court house has a safe space where survivors can be kept away from their abuser while at court
- Pilot a court watch program to enhance the family court response to cases where domestic violence has been identified and/or raised as a safety concern and to provide a forum for feedback to facilitate systems advocacy change

Other panelists discussed the existing court process and potential changes. Judge Albis discussed a new initiative the family court is piloting in Norwich Judicial District Court referred to as TRIAGE, which entails a mandatory triage conference with Family Services early in the case to identify conflict and having the same judge and family relations counselor assigned throughout the case. The CT Judicial Branch is receiving technical assistance on this initiative from the National Center of State Courts.

Click the image below to watch the complete forum:



Save the Date! 9th Annual First 100 Plus Breakfast & Awards

Save the Date



9th Annual Breakfast & Awards Ceremony

Recognizing male and female leaders working to improve the lives of domestic violence victims across Connecticut.

NOVEMBER 15, 2019 | 7:30AM
HARTFORD MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN



Please save the date for our **9th Annual First 100 Plus Breakfast & Awards Ceremony!** Help us honor individuals and organizations from across the state dedicated to addressing domestic violence within their communities. Last year more than 300 attendees joined us to recognize and celebrate the impactful accomplishments of so many. Whether it's strengthening policy and practice

Meet CCADV's Newest Staff!

With our new Safe Connect initiative on the horizon and our new Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking Rapid Re-Housing Project getting up and running, we have quite a few new faces joining us here at CCADV!



Meet (from L to R) Dylan Figueiredo, La-Vette LaBoy, Chenae Russell, Joanne Vitarelli, Annie Stockton Sabrowski, Michelle Marone-Pillsbury, and Teresita Perez-Alamo

Dylan Figueiredo will serve as a **Safe Connect Program Manager**. Dylan has served as a victim advocate for CCADV member organization, Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, as well as for the CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence's Probation Sex Offender Supervision and Parole Special Management Units, providing case management and victim advocacy.

La-Vette Laboy will also serve as a **Safe Connect Program Manager**. She has over 10 years of experience in various human services and clinical work, most recently serving as the Associate Program Director for Community Solutions, supervising staff, providing policy and program monitoring, and supervising maintenance of all client-related information.

Chenae Russell is working with our **Safe Connect** staff this summer to identify and organize available community resources for survivors, including transportation. Chenae is currently working towards her Master of Social Work degree at UConn and interned with us this past year working on several projects including assisting with the development of a toolkit on workplace policies for responding to domestic violence.

Joanne Vitarelli, MPA is our **Director of Quality Assurance**. Most recently she served as Special Programs Coordinator for the CT Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) where she oversaw and administered funds for various programs including diversion, disaster response and child care. Joanne also previously volunteered with CCADV.

Annie Stockton Sabrowski, MPA joins us as our **Director of Housing Advocacy** and will lead the new Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking Rapid Re-Housing Project. Since 2013, Annie has served as the Community Impact Director for the United Way of Southeastern CT where she has, among other things, been responsible for planning, directing and implementing private, state and federal homelessness and housing initiatives.

Michelle Marone-Pillsbury will serve as the **Director of Safe Connect**. For over 20 years she served in various capacities at CCADV member organization, Susan B Anthony Project, most recently as Program Director, managing all aspects of domestic violence and sexual assault direct, crisis, and residential services through a trauma-informed response.

Teresita "Terry" Perez-Alamo will serve as a **Safe Connect Program Manager**. She worked for CCADV member organization, Interval House, for 17 years serving in various capacities, including in both court and shelter settings. Most recently Terry managed data and quality assurance efforts, including project evaluation activities.

Kai Belton, MSW is missing from the photo above, but here she is! She joins us as the **Clinical Director of Safe Connect**. Kai worked for Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) for 15 years serving in various capacities. Most recently she served as the Director of CCADV member organization, New Horizons Domestic Violence Services (a program of CHC), where she led the operation of all domestic violence services including shelter, counseling, advocacy, and community education.



CCADV Hosts National Experts on Effective Victim Engagement within the Criminal Justice System

In June, CCADV partnered with the CT Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST-C) to host a training on trauma-informed interviewing and effective victim engagement in the context of the criminal justice system. Presenters included Teresa Garvey, Attorney Advisor with AEquitas, and Retired Detective, Justin Boardman. Attorney Garvey is an expert on trial strategy, legal analysis and policy, and ethical issues related to violence against women at the local, state, and national levels. Detective (Ret.) Boardman has 15 years of experience in law enforcement, conducting over 400 interviews of child and adult victims of sexual assault.

Det. Boardman reviewed trauma-informed victim interviewing (TIVI). TIVI is intended to account for the body's biological response to trauma and how that impacts interviewing. Det. Boardman suggested limiting on-scene interviews to the basics and scheduling a TIVI 2-4 days after the incident. These interviews should look more like child forensic interviews than suspect interviews with the goal being to get the victim talking in a narrative form and choosing what details to share. Victims should control the narrative and doing most of the talking. TIVIs have been reported to be successful not only in the investigation, but also in keeping the victim engaged through the end of the case.

Attorney Garvey touched on several topics, including victim behavior and evidence-based prosecution. She reviewed one potential tool at the disposal of prosecutors – the doctrine of **forfeiture by wrongdoing** to admit an absent victim's hearsay statements, eliminating the payoff for defendants who seek to silence their victims. Abusers typically engage in campaigns of intimidation and manipulation over the course of the relationship and they count on their ability to cow their victims into silence, presuming they can continue to do so in the legal sphere. While it can only be used when the victim/witness is "unavailable" to testify in court, forfeiture by wrongdoing is an effective strategy for holding offenders accountable and increasing victim safety.

The training had nearly 100 attendees including domestic violence advocates, law enforcement, prosecutors, and staff from both the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division and the Dept. of Children & Families. Feedback from participants was positive, noting the practical tools provided to facilitate continued victim engagement throughout the criminal process. Both presentations were recorded and two training videos are being produced to assist attendees to review the skills and techniques discussed during the presentations. These videos will be available to view on the ctlap.org website under the CCADV Training Videos tab.

2019 Legislative Session Summary

CCADV saw several victories during the 2019 regular session of the CT General Assembly. [Click here for a complete summary!](#)



Public Act 19-43, An Act Concerning the Confidentiality of Law Enforcement Records Concerning Victims of Sexual Assault and Family Violence *(Effective October 1, 2019)*

This measure amends the existing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) statute providing the same level of confidentiality for family violence victims as it currently provided to sexual assault victims with respect to the release of police records. This includes arrest records of victims who are arrested as

part of a dual arrest.

Public Act 19-189, An Act Concerning Parity Between Sexual Assault in the Case of a Spousal or Cohabiting Relationship...and Concerning the Investigation of a Family Violence Crime

This measure eliminates the state's separate spousal rape statute and amends definitions of sexual assault ensuring that all sexual violence laws apply to potential victims regardless of their relationship to their abuser. CCADV partnered with the CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence on this bill. *(Effective October 1, 2019)*

Language was also included to clarify changes made to the state's family violence arrest statute, including carve-outs for arrests only of platonic roommates in certain living situations (please note that anyone experiencing abuse from a platonic roommate is still eligible to apply for a family violence restraining order from the civil court). *(Effective July 1, 2019)*

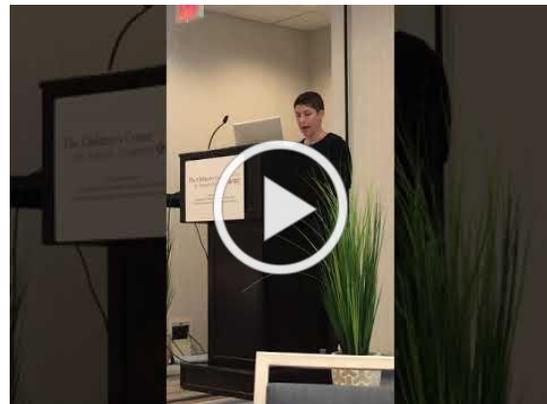
Public Act 19-25, An Act Concerning Paid Family & Medical Leave

Creates a Family & Medical Leave Insurance Program, which will be funded through the Family & Medical Leave Insurance Trust Fund generated through payroll deductions of 0.5% of weekly earnings beginning in January 2021. Benefits are set to become available in January 2022 and will allow eligible workers to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave per year for certain issues. This includes recovery from a serious health condition or to provide care to a family member with a serious illness. This may be particularly beneficial for survivors of domestic violence who need time to recover from a serious injury or illness or who need the support of a family member during that time. CCADV supported passage of this measure as part of the CT Campaign for Paid Family Leave, which was led by the CT Women's Education & Legal Fund. [Click here for a FAQ sheet from the Campaign.](#)

CCFV Conference Focuses on Asset-Based Approaches to Working with Children Exposed to IPV

In May the Children's Center on Family Violence (a partnership between CCADV and CT Children's Medical Center) hosted an engaging one-day conference with presentations from national and local experts on a variety of topics addressing comprehensive approaches to trauma resiliency with kids experiencing family violence.

The day started out with another powerful presentation by Casey Keene of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV). As a member of the Adult Children Exposed to Domestic Violence (ACE-DV) team, Casey stresses that children exposed to family violence can heal and thrive. There are many assets that exist for these children that can be built upon to help them develop resilience and enhanced personal strengths. This includes enhanced awareness of red flags, advanced protective capacity, high tolerance for stress, and creative, high-level problem solving skills, among others.



ACE-DV believes that everyone should be allowed and encouraged to define their own experience and that there is a difference between loving an abusive person and condoning their behavior. For children who have experienced family violence, it is critical that we focus on building upon the assets, strengths and skills associated with trauma rather than focusing solely on the negatives/deficit of trauma.

Dr. Jody Adewale provided the lunchtime keynote presentation which focused on the psychosocial impact of repeated exposure to trauma in the community. Noting that trauma is "like having a treasure map that you don't want to share with anybody...and you also don't want to find the treasure," Dr. Adewale pointed out the impact of acute stress disorder (ASD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that is experienced by many survivors of domestic violence. Referencing a speedometer and how we can all experience a stressful situation and feel like we're going at "100 mph," survivors experiencing ASD and PTSD are "always at 100 mph." These disorders alter a person's cognition and mood and may prevent them from experiencing positive emotions, which is important to understand when working with them.

Additional break-out presentations focused on early childhood mental health, the intersection of trafficking and family violence, reducing mental trauma in the Latino community, the intersection of trauma and risk factors related to LGBT youth and families, and working with families involved in the legal system. For those not able to attend, most conference presentations can be found in the [CCFV website's Resource Library](#) (scroll down to Event Resources).

THANK
you

912 Silas Deane Highway, Lower Level
Wethersfield, CT 06109
860.282.7899

