BE IT RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges implementation of the December 2012 Report of the U.S. Attorney General’s National Task Force on Children’s Exposure to Violence, entitled Defending Childhood, and urges federal, state, territorial, and tribal governments and courts to promptly implement the Report’s recommendations.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association encourages, supports, and is committed to working with the U.S. Department of Justice, state and local prosecutors, state and local bar associations, legal services organizations, law schools, child welfare and juvenile justice agencies, public defender offices and court-appointed legal counsel, and other legal assistance providers and entities that promote improvements in juvenile justice to develop training that educates the legal profession on the issues and recommendations contained in the Defending Childhood Report, and to help promote the practices proposed in the Report.

This resolution was developed and sponsored by the ABA Commission on Youth at Risk. It was co-sponsored by the Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, Section of Family Law, Criminal Justice Section, and the Young Lawyers Division.
REPORT

Introduction

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Justice ("DOJ") commissioned a multidisciplinary group of individuals to be members of a Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence. The Task Force was comprised of 14 leading experts with an array of experience and perspectives, including Co-Chair Joe Torre, former manager of the New York Yankees and founder of the Joe Torre Safe at Home Commission, and Robert Listenbee, now Administrator of DOJ’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The goal of the DOJ Task Force was to make specific recommendations on how best to address the needs of children who have been exposed to violence both in and outside of the juvenile justice system.¹ Policies approved by the ABA, originating since 2006 from the Commission on Youth at Risk’s work, have dealt with a range of related issues, including bullying, foster care, youth courts, and trafficking of children, to name a few.²

In December 2012, after months of hearings and listening sessions around the country,³ the Children Exposed to Violence Task Force’s research-based findings were released as a single Report ("the CEV Report"). The CEV Report, which has six chapters and several subsections within those chapters, provides fifty-six concrete suggestions for how best to improve our current court and justice systems to help children who have been exposed to any sort of violence or trauma. Importantly, the CEV Report also charges the executive and legislative branches of government with coordinating and implementing its recommendations.⁴

Many of the recommendations made by the DOJ’s Task Force are directly aligned with policies previously approved by the American Bar Association House of Delegates. For this reason, the ABA urges prompt implementation of the 56 recommendations of the CEV Report as a policy matter and signal of their importance. All fifty-six recommendations of the CEV Report are timely and significant; each is specifically referenced in Appendix I. This report highlights several of the recommendations, focusing on those closely tied to ABA work and existing policies.

¹ See NAT’L TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE, U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL’S NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE 5-6 (2012) [hereinafter REPORT], found at: http://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf.
³ See REPORT, supra note 1, at 215-225 (detailing the hearings and listening sessions the Task Force conducted to gather the information used in creating the report and its recommendations).
⁴ Id. at 37.
CEV Report Recommendations

The Importance of Trauma-Informed Practices

The CEV Report specifically recommends that all children entering the justice system be screened for exposure to violence. Additionally, the CEV Report recognizes that many youth who exhibit aggressive behavior are not acting maliciously, but are doing so because of their exposure to violence.\(^5\) This means that care within the juvenile justice system must be directed toward interventions that help children dealing with feelings of fear and hopelessness—byproducts of their earlier trauma.\(^6\)

Although the ABA does not have a specific policy endorsing trauma-informed youth screening, the goals of Section 6.1 align with many of the ABA’s existing policies. For example, the ABA recently approved a resolution dealing with child trafficking.\(^7\) In that resolution, the ABA advocates training for law enforcement, child protective services and family services personnel on how to best assess risk and provide aid to victims of trafficking.\(^8\) That resolution also stresses the need for governments to ensure that victims receive prompt services, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment.\(^9\)

The CEV Report calls for children’s legal counsel to be “trauma-informed.” This phrase should be understood to include the fact that a child’s trauma history has the unfortunate potential to be misused, in a way that can both violate a child’s right to confidentiality and lead to even more severe punitive sanctions. To help attorneys understand what “trauma-informed” means, and to set forth the particular concerns that juvenile defense counsel should know, the Association, through the ABA Center on Children and the Law, worked last year with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, its funded “Safe Start Center” program, and others to develop materials to aid attorneys who represent children in understanding and responding to child trauma issues. That work has resulted in the publication of *Identifying Polyvictimization and Trauma Among Court-Involved Children and Youth: A Checklist and Resource Guide for Attorneys and Other Court-Appointed Advocates*.\(^10\)

Frequently, the experiences of children and youth in the juvenile justice system are themselves traumatic. The CEV recommendations encourage new sensitivity to children who have been exposed to violence. Section 6.2 stresses the need to divert youth who have committed minor or nonviolent offenses away from juvenile justice correctional facilities.

The section goes further. It suggests that once a child has entered a juvenile justice facility, they receive mental health screening and services in addition to those that further the established goals of the juvenile justice system—safety, justice, and rehabilitation.\(^11\) As the CEV Report points out, only a fraction of the youth in juvenile detention who have mental health needs are getting appropriate services for those needs.\(^12\) To compound the problem, many children who

\(^{5}\) *Id.*
\(^{6}\) *Id.* at 176-77.
\(^{7}\) *See Child Trafficking, supra note 2.*
\(^{8}\) *Id.*
\(^{9}\) *Id.*
\(^{11}\) REPORT, *supra* note 1, at 178.
\(^{12}\) *Id.*
have experienced trauma also endure punitive measures, such as solitary confinement, that are still common in our juvenile justice system.\textsuperscript{13} The CEV Report highlights that there is no evidence solitary confinement is rehabilitative; in fact, the suicide rate for youth who have been isolated is disproportionately high.\textsuperscript{14} The report recommends that children in juvenile detention be independently monitored in order to ensure that they are not being abused and that they are receiving appropriate, trauma-informed services.\textsuperscript{15}

These recommendations, especially in their focus on keeping children out of juvenile detention whenever possible, closely relate to several of the ABA’s previous resolutions. Specifically, the ABA’s resolution on “Diversion of Juvenile Status Offenders” focuses on keeping alleged juvenile status offenders in the home and out of court whenever possible.\textsuperscript{16} The same resolution promotes the development and implementation of “evidence-based” and “youth-focused” services for alleged and adjudicated juvenile status offenders.\textsuperscript{17} Additionally, the ABA’s “Regulation of Private Residential Treatment Programs for Youth” resolution focuses on the need for the government to independently monitor and assess residential treatment centers for at risk youth.\textsuperscript{18} This concept is aligned with the CEV Report’s recommendation for independent monitoring of youth while in detention facilities.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Cultural and Identity-Sensitive Responses}

The CEV Report recognizes the importance of considering a child’s ethno-cultural background when developing juvenile justice services for each individual child who has been exposed to violence. Section 6.3 emphasizes the disproportionate numbers of minority youth in the juvenile justice system, many of these youth being African American or Latino.\textsuperscript{20} The section also stresses the importance of screening these youth in culturally-sensitive ways in order to determine their prior exposure to violence.\textsuperscript{21}

Often, youth in the juvenile justice system are exposed to violence in their own communities. Youth of color are disproportionately represented in that system. As a result, it is particularly important for the system to respond in culturally appropriate ways to the experiences of youth of color.\textsuperscript{22} At the point of system entry, it is vital that screening and treatment for prior exposure to violence take place in order to ameliorate the effects of that prior trauma.\textsuperscript{23} Additionally, many victims of trauma will at times resort to aggressive or bullying behavior as a

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{11} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{12} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{13} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{15} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{17} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{18} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{19} \textit{REPORT, supra note 1, at 180.}
\bibitem{20} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{21} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{22} \textit{Id.}
\bibitem{23} \textit{Id.}
\end{thebibliography}
learned response. In order to reduce this type of behavior, culturally-sensitive and trauma-informed services must be in place.

The CEV Report also stresses the need to provide training to all personnel who work with youth within the juvenile justice system to ensure maximum cultural sensitivity. This is important not only in screening and providing services to youth while in the system, but also in helping to make sure that the youth engage in the services. The CEV Report points out that the “degree to which services and treatments are culturally sensitive influences the expectations of youth and caregivers as well as their acceptance and rejection of those services.”

Culturally sensitive responses to children and youth in care are consistent with ABA policy. In its resolution on addressing racial disparities in the child welfare system, the ABA recognized the special needs of people from different racial and cultural backgrounds, especially because racial minorities comprise a disproportionate segment of those in the child welfare system. Specifically, that resolution charges leaders with researching the causes for racial disparities and legislating and enforcing policies with an eye toward closing that gap. Importantly, the resolution urges all members of the child welfare team, of which juvenile detention officers should be a part, to receive training on cultural competencies, institutional and unconscious biases, and avoidance of disparate treatment of racial and ethnic minority children and families.

Girls in the juvenile justice system also face many challenges and have a need for unique services which too often goes unmet. Girls in the juvenile justice system have a high need for services and present a low risk of danger to the public. Ninety percent of girls in the juvenile justice system report that they have experienced emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse. Girls in the juvenile justice system also have a high rate of mental health issues, including depression, substance abuse, and self-mutilation. Additionally, 20 percent of girls in the juvenile justice system have or are expecting children. The CEV Report recommends that federal, state, tribal, and local governments act to ensure that juvenile justice facilities provide appropriate trauma-informed, gender-responsive services to girls in the juvenile justice system that have experienced violence and other trauma. These services will facilitate healing for girls coping with the aftermath of violence and trauma and will enable them to develop their individual strengths and maintain healthy relationships.

The ABA’s past policy on diversion of juvenile status offenders proposed the development of gender-responsive programs and services for youth in the juvenile justice

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24 *Id.*
25 *Id.*
26 *Id.*
27 *Id.*
29 *Id.*
30 *Id.*
31 *Id.*
32 *Id.*
33 *Id.*
34 *Id.*
35 *Id.* at 182.
36 *Id.*
Gender-responsive programs include services created and implemented specifically for girls in the juvenile justice system and the difficulties they face.

The ABA has also approved a policy on victims of child trafficking which is very similar to a recommendation in the CEV Report. Youth who have been victims of child trafficking, mostly girls, are often prosecuted as juvenile offenders and end up in the juvenile justice system without the services they need to address the trauma of their experiences. The ABA has proposed that law enforcement officials view youth who have been involved in the sex trade as victims, not as juvenile offenders, and that those youth be provided with services such as “health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, educational and vocational training, residential care, and other victim services” to help them heal from the violence and trauma they experienced and to enable them to go on to lead healthy and successful lives.

The CEV Report recommends a similar approach for girls in the juvenile justice system. Instead of viewing girls in the juvenile justice system as incorrigible adolescent criminals, the CEV Report suggests that treatment of girls in the system should be focused on their higher instances of abuse, trauma, and mental health problems, and girls should receive services that respond appropriately. As evidenced by the ABA’s policy on victims of child trafficking, the ABA supports the idea that youth in the juvenile justice system should be treated in a manner which is informed by their age and their experiences with violence and other trauma.

Section 6.5 of the CEV Report goes further to take into account the special needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and sexually questioning (LGBTQ) youth who have entered the juvenile justice system. This section emphasizes the harsh treatment that LGBTQ youth, many of whom have been victims of prior trauma, can sometimes receive in the juvenile justice system. LGBTQ youth are routinely bullied and harassed, by peers and also by “the same staff charged with monitoring and protecting” them. The CEV Report further endorses trauma-informed methods that do not serve to perpetuate stigma or stereotypes about LGBT youth.

Section 6.5 also stresses the need to train staff who work within the juvenile justice system on how best to support a youth’s sexuality while also enabling them to make responsible and safe decisions. Sometimes, LGBTQ youth are put in isolation by juvenile detention staff in order to shield them from aforementioned bullying, but this solitary confinement can serve to exacerbate trauma in many children. Instead, “consistent therapeutic supervision” should be implemented in all juvenile justice facilities, without resorting to isolation, “to ensure the safety of LGBT[Q] youth and thus protect them from further violence.”

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37 Diversion of Juvenile Status Offenders, supra note 17.
38 REPORT, supra note 1, at 189.
39 Child Trafficking, supra note 2.
40 See REPORT, supra note 1, at 181 (noting that girls in the juvenile justice system have a high need for services and present a low risk of danger to the public).
41 See Child Trafficking, supra note 2 (law enforcement officials should not charge victims of child trafficking with crimes and such youth should receive appropriate services).
42 Id. at 183.
43 Id.
44 Id.
45 Id.
46 REPORT, supra note 1, at 183.
47 Id.
48 Id.
The ABA embodied its concern and support for LGBTQ youth with its resolution on the safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender homeless and foster youth. In that resolution, the ABA urged governmental systems to support policies that “recognize the actual, and risk of, harm, violence, and harassment LGBTQ youth face in congregate care facilities and in-home placements.” The resolution also advocated LGBTQ sensitivity training for all professionals who are involved with LGBTQ youth. Additionally, as the CEV Report focuses on bullying of LGBTQ youth, the ABA’s recent resolution on preventing and addressing bullying and harassment of youth is also relevant to Section 6.5.

Education, Discipline and Trauma

Harsh and exclusionary school disciplinary policies result in a large number of youth entering the juvenile justice system each year. Youth who are suspended or expelled from school have a greater risk of substance abuse, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and delinquent or criminal behavior. The CEV Report recommends that schools implement policies which are not harsh or exclusionary and which do not rely on the juvenile justice system to enforce discipline. Rather, schools should implement policies which assist youth in developing better ways to handle stress, peer pressure, and problems within their family and peer relationships.

The ABA’s policy on youth rights to remain in school calls for federal, state, and local governments and authorities to “help advance the right to remain in school, promote a safe and supportive school environment for all children, and enable them to complete school.” Moreover, the right to remain in school policy advocates for the limitation of school disciplinary policies which disrupt students’ regular access to the classroom and other educational programs. The ABA has also adopted a policy on youth rights to return to school, which urges the implementation of policies which enable youth who have left school to return to complete their educational programs.

The CEV Report’s recommendation that harsh and/or exclusionary school disciplinary policies be abandoned in favor of policies which allow youth to remain in school is in line with the ABA’s policies on youths’ rights to remain and to return to school. Youth who remain in school and complete their educational programs have a much greater chance of staying out of the juvenile justice system-- and, later on in life, the criminal justice system-- than youth who drop out or engage in truant behavior. Exclusionary disciplinary policies, like suspension and expulsion, lead to an increased rate of truancy and/or dropout and, ultimately, involvement in the juvenile justice system.

50 Id.
51 ABA Comm’n on Youth at Risk, Bullying & Harassment, AM. BAR ASS’N (Feb. 2011), http://www.americanbar.org/groups/youth_at_risk/commission_policyresolutions/bullying_and_harrassment.html.
52 REPORT, supra note 1, at 183.
53 Id. at 184.
54 Id. at 183.
55 Id. at 185.
57 Id.
58 Id.
These concerns are particularly acute in the wake of the December 14, 2012 Newtown tragedy, as efforts to ensure “safe” schools do not always adequately consider the need to maintain a supportive and nurturing school environment in which students can thrive on a daily basis. Judges, lawyers, law enforcement, and school personnel should work together to adopt and implement policies which enforce discipline through non-exclusionary means so that students can stay in school and have a better chance of avoiding the “school-to-prison pipeline.”

Legal Representation

The CEV Report recommends that all children entering the juvenile justice system be screened for exposure to violence and given access to trauma-informed services. The CEV Report also proposes that defense attorneys who represent youth in the juvenile justice system should receive training on how to identify and respond to youth who have been exposed to violence.

In some jurisdictions, eighty to ninety percent of youth appear in court without any counsel to represent their interest and advocate for their needs. In light of this deprivation of the right to counsel, the CEV Report further suggests that “financial means” tests for the appointment of defense counsel to youth involved in the juvenile justice system be abandoned and that all youth be presumed indigent for the purpose of appointing counsel. Universal appointment of independent legal counsel for all children in juvenile delinquency proceedings has been an Association policy dating back to the late 1970’s when the ABA approved a set of Juvenile Justice Standards.

In order to receive services, youth who have been exposed to violence must be identified and given adequate means to gain access to those services. Defense attorneys who represent youth in delinquency proceedings are in a position to help their clients receive the programs and services they need to address the effects of their experiences with violence and trauma. If given the right training (which, as mentioned above, addresses confidentiality issues and the potential for misuse of trauma history information), defense attorneys can identify youth who have been exposed to violence and respond to their clients’ needs by being aware of appropriate services and advocating, as part of case disposition, for the clients’ receipt of those services.

Access to defense counsel in every case, and as long as the youth remains in the juvenile justice system, should lead to greater access to trauma-related treatment and services, and it is consistent with ABA policy and further bolstered by the CEV Report’s recommendation that youth in the juvenile justice system always have legal representation.

Child Trafficking

As mentioned above, child victims of sex trafficking have often been viewed by law enforcement agencies as juvenile delinquents and have been prosecuted for solicitation and prostitution. However, sex trafficking is considered a form of modern-day slavery and the victims of it, including child victims, are subjected to sexual exploitation and forced labor. The

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59 REPORT, supra note 1, at 185.
60 Id.
61 Id. at 186.
62 Id.
63 REPORT, supra note 1, at 189.
64 Id. at 187.
CEV Report recommends that child victims of sex trafficking be treated as victims and not delinquents. The CEV Report also proposes that child victims be protected and given access to trauma-informed services to address their exposure to violence and exploitation.

The ABA’s recent policy on child trafficking reiterates the same basic principles as the CEV Report. The child trafficking policy encourages use of protective services for child victims of sex trafficking and urges that, except for in extreme and compelling circumstances, child victims not be charged with “the crimes of engaging in prostitution or soliciting themselves, loitering with the intent to engage in prostitution, or status offenses that are incident to their trafficking situation.” The policy also proposes that child victims be given access to services, which will enable them to address and heal from their traumatic experiences, including mental health, substance abuse, and other victim services. Child victims of sex trafficking should not be considered delinquents or criminals prosecuted for wrong-doing, but rather as victims of violent and traumatic experiences who require access to protective and trauma-informed services.

Age and Trauma

Thousands of youth are tried as adults and held in adult prisons every year in the United States. But adult prisons are not appropriately equipped to address the safety or needs of juvenile offenders. Youth in adult prisons are significantly more likely to commit suicide and are five times as likely to be sexually abused or raped compared to a juvenile facility. The CEV Report recommends that youth who commit criminal offenses be prosecuted in the juvenile justice system and be held in juvenile facilities. The CEV Report encourages use of screening and trauma-informed services to help youthful offenders cope with their exposure to violence and to enable them to grow and become healthy, productive citizens.

The overarching theme of prior ABA policies is that most youth who have been exposed to violence and trauma, but who have committed juvenile offenses, are not hardened, non-redeemable criminals who should be locked away, but rather are young people who have the capacity to learn, mature, and heal from their violent experiences and who should be given access to services which will help them do so. In other words, youth in the juvenile justice system should be treated in an age-appropriate manner that recognizes that they require services to address their exposure to violence and trauma. Youth in the juvenile justice system are not adults and should not be treated as if they were. The CEV Report’s recommendation that minors should rarely be prosecuted as adults or held in adult prisons is a best practice supported by ABA policy.

Effective Action and Implementation

The CEV Report recognizes it is essential that implementation of its recommendations include “the assistance of multiple Cabinet officers and federal departments to shape and sustain a truly national response” to the issues children who have been exposed to violence are dealing

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65 Id. at 189.
66 Id.
67 Child Trafficking, supra note 2.
68 Id.
69 REPORT, supra note 1, at 190.
70 Id.
71 Id.
72 Id.
73 Id. at 189-90.
Additionally, the CEV Report recommends that “a consortium of leaders” from all areas of government—federal, state, local, tribal—come together to help implement the recommendations in the Report.\(^\text{75}\)

The ABA includes similar provisions, reflective of what is stated in Section 1.1, of the CEV Report in many of its own policy resolutions.\(^\text{76}\) The ABA frequently urges federal and state legislatures, government agencies, and the courts to act on a specific topic.\(^\text{77}\) Therefore, the ABA similarly hopes to ensure that the Executive and Legislative branches are accountable for the implementation of this Report’s recommendations.

**Conclusion**

The recommendations of the CEV Report regarding youth in the juvenile justice system seek to ensure that youth who have been exposed to violence receive the services they need to address its effects. The recommendations also promote the idea that youth in the juvenile justice system should not be treated as hardened, irredeemable delinquents or criminals. Instead, youth should be treated in a way that takes their age, background, identity, and violent or traumatic experiences into account. The ABA has approved a number of related policies calling for implementation of the same ideas and principles addressed by the CEV Report.

Comprehensive implementation of these recommendations is consistent with the policies and goals of the ABA and will ensure that federal, state, and local governments are held responsible for the care and well-being of violence-exposed young people, provide a fair legal process and meaningful access to justice, and offer services to improve the lives, rehabilitation, and future of court-involved youth.

**APPENDIX I**

**TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS\(^\text{78}\)**

1. **Ending the Epidemic of Children Exposed to Violence**

1.1 Charge leaders at the highest levels of the executive and legislative branches of the federal government with the coordination and implementation of the recommendations in this report.
1.2 Appoint a federal task force or commission to examine the needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children exposed to violence.
1.3 Engage youth as leaders and peer experts in all initiatives defending children against violence and its harmful effects.
1.4 Ensure universal public awareness of the crisis of children exposed to violence and change social norms to protect children from violence and its harmful effects.
1.5 Incorporate evidence-based trauma-informed principles in all applicable federal agency grant requirements.
1.6 Launch a national initiative to promote professional education and training on the issue of children exposed to violence.

\(^\text{74}\) *REPORT, supra* note 1, at 37.
\(^\text{75}\) *Id.*
\(^\text{76}\) See, e.g., *Youth Courts, supra* note 2; *Child Trafficking, supra* note 2.
\(^\text{77}\) *Id.*
1.7 Continue to support and sustain the national data collection infrastructure for the monitoring of trends in children exposed to violence.
1.8 Create national centers of excellence on children’s exposure to violence.
1.9 Develop and implement public policy initiatives in state, tribal, and local governments to reduce and address the impact of childhood exposure to violence.
1.10 Finance change by adjusting existing allocations and leveraging new funding.

2. Identifying Children Exposed to Violence

2.1 Galvanize the public to identify and respond to children exposed to violence.
2.2 Ensure that all children exposed to violence are identified, screened, and assessed.
2.3 Include curricula in all university undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure that every child- and family-serving professional receives training in multiple evidence-based methods for identifying and screening children for exposure to violence.
2.4 Develop and disseminate standards in professional societies and associations for conducting comprehensive specialized assessments of children exposed to violence.

3. Treatment and Healing of Exposure to Violence

3.1 Provide all children exposed to violence access to trauma-informed services and evidence-based trauma-specific treatment.
3.2 Adapt evidence-based treatments for children exposed to violence and psychological trauma to the cultural beliefs and practices of the recipients and their communities.
3.3 Develop and provide trauma-informed care in all hospital-based trauma centers and emergency departments for all children exposed to violence.
3.4 Share information and implement coordinated and adaptive approaches to improve the quality of trauma-specific treatments and trauma-focused services and their delivery by organizations and professionals across settings and disciplines to children exposed to violence.
3.5 Provide trauma-specific treatments in all agencies and organizations serving children and families exposed to violence and psychological trauma that are suitable to their clinicians’ and staff members’ professional and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities.
3.6 Ensure that every professional and advocate serving children exposed to violence and psychological trauma learns and provides trauma-informed care and trauma-focused services.
3.7 Grow and sustain an adequate workforce of trauma-informed service providers, with particular attention paid to the recruitment, training, and retention of culturally diverse providers.
3.8 Ensure that professional societies develop, adopt, disseminate, and implement principles, practices, and standards for comprehensive evidence-based treatment of children exposed to violence or psychological trauma.
3.9 Provide research funding to continue the clinical and scientific development of increasingly effective evidence-based treatments for children exposed to violence.
3.10 Provide individuals who conduct services and treatment for children exposed to violence with workforce protection to prepare them for the personal impact of this work and to assist them in maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.
3.11 Incentivize healthcare providers and insurance providers to reimburse trauma-focused services and trauma-specific treatment.

4. Creating Safe and Nurturing Homes

4.1 Expand access to home visiting services for families with children who are exposed to violence, focusing on safety and referral to services.
4.2 Increase collaborative responses by police, mental health providers, domestic violence advocates, child protective service workers, and court personnel for women and children who are victimized by intimate partner violence.

4.3 Ensure that parents who are victims of domestic violence have access to services and counseling that help them protect and care for their children.

4.4 When domestic violence and child sexual or physical abuse co-occur, ensure that the dependency and family courts, the child protection system, and domestic violence programs work together to create protocols and policies that protect children and adult victims.

4.5 Create multidisciplinary councils or coalitions to assure systemwide collaboration and coordinated community responses to children exposed to family violence.

4.6 Provide families affected by sexual abuse, physical abuse, and domestic violence with education and services to prevent further abuse, to respond to the adverse effects on the family, and to enable the children to recover.

4.7 Ensure that parenting programs in child- and family-serving agencies, including fatherhood programs and other programs specifically for men, integrate strategies for preventing domestic violence and sexual assault and include reparation strategies when violence has already occurred.

4.8 Provide support and counseling to address the unique consequences for children exposed to lethal violence, both in the home as a result of domestic violence homicides and suicides, and in the community.

4.9 Develop interventions in all child- and family-serving agencies that build on the assets and values of each family’s culture of origin and incorporate the linguistic and acculturation challenges of immigrant children and parents. Evidence-based interventions should be created specifically for immigrant children.

4.10 Ensure compliance with the letter and spirit of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

4.11 Initiate a nationally sponsored program similar to the Department of Defense’s community and family support programs that provides military families with specialized services focused on building strengths and resilience, new parent support, youth programs, and forging partnerships with communities.

5. Communities Rising Up Out of Violence

5.1 Organize local coalitions in every community representing professionals from multiple disciplines and the full range of service systems (including law enforcement, the courts, health care, schools, family services, child protection, domestic violence programs, rape crisis centers, and child advocacy centers) as well as families and other community members, to assess local challenges and resources, develop strategies, and carry out coordinated responses to reduce violence and the number of children exposed to violence.

5.2 Recognize and support the critical role of law enforcement’s participation in collaborative responses to violence.

5.3 Involve men and boys as critical partners in preventing violence.

5.4 Foster, promote, and model healthy relationships for children and youth.

5.5 Develop and implement policies to improve the reporting of suspected child sexual abuse in every institution entrusted with the care and nurturing of children.

5.6 Train and require child care providers to meet professional and legal standards for identifying young children exposed to violence and reducing their exposure to it.

5.7 Provide schools with the resources they need to create and sustain safe places where children exposed to violence can get help.

5.8 Provide children, parents, schools, and communities with the tools they need to identify and stop bullying and to help children who have been bullied — including the bullies themselves — to recover from social, emotional, and school problems.
5.9 Put programs to identify and protect children exposed to community violence who struggle with suicidality in place in every community.
5.10 Support community programs that provide youth with mentoring as an intervention and as a prevention strategy, to reduce victimization by and involvement in violence and to promote healthy development by youths.
5.11 Help communities learn and share what works by investing in research.

6. Rethinking Our Juvenile Justice System

6.1 Make trauma-informed screening, assessment, and care the standard in juvenile justice services.
6.2 Abandon juvenile justice correctional practices that traumatize children and further reduce their opportunities to become productive members of society.
6.3 Provide juvenile justice services appropriate to children’s ethnocultural background that are based on an assessment of each violence-exposed child’s individual needs.
6.4 Provide care and services to address the special circumstances and needs of girls in the juvenile justice system.
6.5 Provide care and services to address the special circumstances and needs of LGBTQ (lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning) youth in the juvenile justice system.
6.6 Develop and implement policies in every school system across the country that aim to keep children in school rather than relying on policies that lead to suspension and expulsion and ultimately drive children into the juvenile justice system.
6.7 Guarantee that all violence-exposed children accused of a crime have legal representation.
6.8 Help, do not punish, child victims of sex trafficking.
6.9 Whenever possible, prosecute young offenders in the juvenile justice system instead of transferring their cases to adult courts.