Winona State University
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Project at a Glance
• Create model undergraduate and graduate curricula and provide training and resources to front-line child protection professionals, including social workers, teachers, nurses, psychologists and law enforcement professionals
• Help states establish locally run programs to teach investigators and prosecutors how to interview child abuse victims
• Part of a comprehensive national plan to significantly reduce child abuse in the United States
• An innovative partnership between Winona State University and numerous national and state child protection organizations including the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center

Project Description
An estimated $94 billion is spent every year dealing with the aftermath of child abuse. Abused children are more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behavior, use drugs, drop out of school and suffer depression or other forms of serious mental or physical illnesses. Child abuse has a sweeping negative impact on society. An investment on the front end of this problem can save costs and thousands of lives.

The National Child Protection Training Center is the premier trainer of child abuse investigators and prosecutors. Each year, at the request of state and local government child protection professionals, the center trains more than 10,000 front-line investigators and prosecutors. With the center’s guidance, state and local government officials have established locally run forensic interview training programs. The center’s staff has provided technical assistance for more than 1,000 child protection cases around the country.

Requested funds will allow the National Child Protection Training Center to expand training and resources to front-line child protection professionals, including social workers, teachers, nurses, psychologists and law enforcement officers. The funding will expand the center’s capacity to help states establish locally run programs teach investigators and prosecutors how to interview child abuse victims. The work of the center will contribute to the comprehensive national plan, developed after input from thousands of child protection professionals, to significantly reduce child abuse, if not end, in the United States.

Further, the center will provide a national clearinghouse and training center for child protection professionals and provide additional resources for a forensic interview training program. In an effort to provide sustained effectiveness, the center is assisting institutions of higher education in developing model undergraduate and graduate curricula for child protection professionals.
National Child Protection Training Center

The center focuses on technical assistance, training and publications for professionals employed in the field, with its primary focus on the civil side of child protection dealing with issues such as dependency and neglect petitions and termination of parental rights.

The center offers national hands-on conferences several times a year. Courses include:

• “Investigating, Proving and Assessing Reunification in Civil Child Protection Cases,” designed for child protection professionals whose duties include responding to an allegation of abuse.

• “Child First,” an intensive five-day course in collaboration with CornerHouse, a nonprofit interagency child abuse evaluation and training center in Minneapolis. This interactive course combines lectures with demonstrations and experience. Students interview a child about a nonabuse event and are critiqued by an expert forensic interviewer. Students also conduct a 30-minute interview with an actor playing the role of an abused child, and they learn to conduct an investigative interview of a child abuse victim using the CornerHouse forensic interview process.

• “The Forensic Interviewer at Trial,” a five-day trial-advocacy course designed to meet the needs of prosecutors and forensic interviewers. Students are taught and critiqued by the nation’s foremost child abuse experts. Students conduct direct examinations of social workers, police officers and psychologists and cross-examine witnesses offered by the defense counsel.

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