

**REPORT TO THE  
VERMONT LEGISLATURE  
ON  
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNITS**

Act 63 (Section E.206)

Report to  
Joint Fiscal Committee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
House Committee on the Judiciary  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

From:  
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Vermont Department of State's Attorneys  
Chairman of the SIU Policy Board  
12 Baldwin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-6401

December 29, 2011

## Report to the Legislature

### **Prepared by:**

James P. Mongeon, Executive Director,  
Vermont Department of State's Attorneys  
& Chairman of the SIU Policy Board

Marc Metayer  
SIU Grants Program Manager

### **Background:**

#### **2011-2012 Legislative Session**

#### **No. 63. An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government.**

(H.441)

*Sec. E.206 Special investigative unit*

*(a) The director of the state's attorneys shall report to the joint fiscal committee and the house and senate committees on judiciary and appropriations by November 15, 2011 on issues related to the effectiveness of the special investigation units (SIU). The report shall be made in consultation with the state and local law enforcement agencies, the department for children and families, and victims' organizations. The report shall include information by SIU about the number of investigations and referrals; the number of reported claims of abuse, entity who first responded to the claim, response time, percentage of those cases that were referred to SIU; and total funding including state, county, and local direct and indirect support. The report shall also specifically report by SIU the region covered by each SIU and the support each county and community contribute to the SIU. The report shall make recommendations for changes in structure and practice that would increase SIU effectiveness.*

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VT LEG 270429.1

### **EXTENSION:**

The Legislative Committee extended the deadline until December 31, 2011 at the request of the Chairman of the Policy Board so that the Chairman and the new Grants Program Manager could conduct site visits to each SIU as part of the assessment and report.

**Method:**

At the direction of the SIU Policy Board, the Chair of the Board, James P. Mongeon and the Grants Program Manager, Marc Metayer, conducted site visits with each county-based Special Investigation Unit to assess the present status of each multi-disciplinary team. The construct of the multi-disciplinary team underpins the mission of each Special Investigation Unit and as such, is the baseline to be used in determining the current effectiveness of the respective units.

Of note, the position of Grants Program Manager changed during the time from July to mid-October 2011. The new Grants Program Manager was not in place until mid-October, therefore, the field research and preparation of this report was delayed beyond the required November 15, 2011 date specified in Act No. 63. The Chair of the SIU Policy Board requested, and was granted, an extension of the submission date to December 30, 2011.

Upon the recommendation of a sub-committee on statistical reporting, the SIU Policy Board approved the use of a revised statistical reporting form as a means of capturing the information requested by the Legislature (see Appendix - A). The SIUs were able to use the newly designed form to capture information during the first fiscal quarter (Jul-Sept). This experience has prompted the recommendation of establishment of an SIU-centric reporting system (to be discussed in the recommendations section). Reporting was limited to three crimes: sexual assaults-child; sexual assaults-adult; serious child abuse.

Statistical information has been condensed from the submitted data and presented in summary form. Complete unit statistics are available upon request, but are not included in the scope of this report. Census information is included to indicate the population served by each respective unit; expressed as a percentage of overall population in Vermont.

The SIU site visits were conducted during November and December. A standardized checklist was utilized to assess the current status of each component within the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) model (see Appendix - B). Information gathered during the site visits has been analyzed and presented in a series of matrices in order by SIU.

A narrative report is provided on each SIU. The narrative contains specific information concerning the organization, history, and current status of the respective SIU as well as current funding sources and future needs.

We requested meetings at each SIU with at least the SIU Director SIU, the State's Attorney, and the Chairperson of the local SIU board. They could bring other persons to the meetings and did so in several of instances.

Standardized questions were posed to each SIU about involvement of police investigators, prosecutors, victim advocates, medical specialists, mental health counselors and local issues. The responses are noted in a table with each SIU narrative report.

We also had the opportunity to meet with some Sheriffs and Police Chiefs at their meeting in December. Marc met with VSP on issues involving that agency. We did not meet with specific groups such as Deputy State's Attorneys, Victim Advocates, medical specialists or mental health counselors, but did inquire about each with the SIU groups. We also received input from members of the SIU Policy Board from our meeting of December 16 and collaborated with the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services on the victim advocacy section.

This Legislative report will use a summary format containing identified ***STRENGTHS***, ***CHALLENGES***, and ***RECOMMENDATIONS*** for each unit as well as for the overall program.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beginning with the first quarter of FY' 12, Special Investigation Units (SIU) are now required to submit program and financial reports on a quarterly basis. Data gathered from these reports and information obtained during site visits conducted at each SIU form the basis of this report.

The goal of the site visits was to conduct a review of the current operational status of each unit. The foundation of the SIU concept is the multi-disciplinary team (MDT); for the purposes of this report, the standard with which the units were assessed is an MDT as prescribed by the National Children's Alliance. The MDT is comprised of law enforcement investigators; child services investigators, prosecutors, medical specialists, mental health specialists, and victim advocates. As such, each component of the MDT served as a measure for unit success. The site visits recorded the current status of each MDT along with a review of physical location and unit procedures related to case management and training.

**Law Enforcement:** Each SIU has an investigator from municipal police, Sheriff's Departments, and/or State Police. The range of officers assigned directly to a SIU goes from a high of eight (CUSI-Chittenden county) to zero (ACUSI-Addison). SIU have, on average, two investigators per unit, from a variety of host agencies. The State Police provide a directly assigned investigator to each unit with the exception of Orange county (2-Orange County Sheriff's Deputies assigned), and Addison county (investigator assigned on case by case basis).

The Essex County Sheriff's Department is currently taking advantage of the reimbursement grant provision (\$20,000) and thereby supports the efforts of two SIU (Orleans/Northern Essex and Caledonia/Southern Essex) by providing supplemental investigative resources in Essex County.

The Grand Isle County Sheriff's Department is developing a partnership with NUSI (Franklin/Grand Isle counties) to also utilize reimbursement grant funding for supporting investigations in Grand Isle County. A satellite office arrangement is in development.

Many of the municipal officers and Sheriff's deputies are funded by law enforcement grants (up to \$40,000), but funding limitation to 50% of personnel costs continues to be a problem for many departments. Turnover in the investigator ranks is a developing challenge for a number of SIU. We are exploring staffing opportunities with the law enforcement police agencies.

**Department for Children and Families:** DCF work districts and the division of work load for the Department itself have given rise to a surprising challenge. DCF investigators are key players in each MDT and ideally would be co-located within each SIU for optimal effectiveness. In fact, DCF investigators are actively involved with all of the SIU across the state, but it is in only rare instances that DCF staff is co-located (CUSI-Chittenden and ROSI-Rutland). The standard is that DCF investigators are assigned cases from their respective DCF offices; they then integrate with the rest of the MDT on a case by case basis. Most DCF offices are in close

proximity to SIU locations and good collaboration is reported. However, in some parts of the state, a SIU/MDT must work with two or three separate DCF district offices and the resultant compliment of rotating investigators. This has given rise to a measure of ineffectiveness with respect to case reviews and impacted the ability to provide a seamless response in some counties.

**NOTE:** The problematic multi-district issue with state agencies is not confined to DCF; similar observations have been made with respect to State Police resources, as well.

There is no clear and simple resolution to this, and as such, it will continue to be a condition that will require a certain amount of flexibility by those SIU impacted by this issue. These observations do not minimize the level of commitment and the skill level represented by the DCF investigators and management. Rather, it became apparent as we conducted the site visits that there was strong support to improve the ability of DCF to become a fully integrated part of the multi-disciplinary teams on a co-located basis. It must also be recognized that some of the SIU do not currently have adequate space for immediate team additions, but that appeared to be less of an issue than the perception that DCF was being constrained by district boundaries.

**State's Attorneys:** Prosecutors continue to be thoroughly engaged in the MDT concept. The larger offices have dedicated prosecutors to specialize in the support of the SIU cases. The smaller offices have an attorney to handle to bulk of SIU cases and divide the workload as necessary. A number of SIU are part of, or immediately adjacent to, the State's Attorney's office in their county. For security and confidentiality reasons, those SIU located in the same building with the SA's office are separated for access purposes. The site visits revealed the need and desire for advanced training specific to SIU caseload. Additionally, there is support for development of improved networking for prosecutors on emerging issues related to SIU caseload.

**Medical:** The SIU rely upon the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (S.A.N.E.) program that is available at most hospitals that SIU staff work with regionally. Some units do not have full access to pediatric certified S.A.N.E. practitioners, but all felt that they had access to medical specialists as required. These professionals are not co-located with the SIU because of the need for their availability at the respective hospital/practice locations. When case reviews require the presence of someone with appropriate medical expertise, the SIU report that they have access to this resource.

**Mental Health:** Mental health support is provided in general by privately contracted practitioners or county mental health agencies. Most units have close working relationships with therapists in their geographic area. Space is provided within most of the units for use by the therapists on a scheduled or as needed basis, or the therapist/counselor has separate office space that enables access to services. The level of demand for this service does not require a co-location arrangement. Those units who do not have direct business arrangements with a

therapist/counselor will rely upon the services available through the court or victim advocate in their jurisdiction. A few units are still working on developing this aspect of the MDT.

**Victim Advocate:** This component of the multi-disciplinary team is one of the most critical with respect to support of victims (which is the main pillar of the MDT model). Full engagement by both state-based and community-based victim advocates with the MDT is highly suggested. When a case is charged by the prosecutor, advocacy is provided by the State's Attorney's victim advocate. In some cases, adult sexual assault victims receive concurrent advocacy from Network advocates. Only two counties (Chittenden and Franklin – Grand Isle) have a dedicated State's Attorney's Victim Advocate co-located with the SIU. While this model is highly effective, it is unlikely to be replicated elsewhere without an infusion of significant financial resources.

CAC staff provides initial victim advocate support until a case reaches the State's Attorney's office for prosecution or a referral is made to a Network program for an adult victim of sexual assault. With every county having a different level of victim advocates, it is critical for the advocacy community to develop close networking relationships and protocols for referral and service to insure a seamless system of victim support, for both child and adult alike.

**Child Advocacy Center:** Nearly all of the SIU are part of, or associated with, child advocacy center. Six units are not accredited (Addison, Caledonia, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, and Washington), but only Addison and Lamoille are unlikely to achieve independent accredited status within the next eighteen months. Washington and Orleans were previously accredited CACs, and are currently in the process of re-establishing their status. Caledonia and Orange were recently divided from Orleans and each will be working on independent CAC accreditation. By virtue of affiliation with the National Children's Advocacy Center (the accreditation body), each CAC has access to a consolidated records management system (NCATrak). The attributes of NCATrak are highly regarded and use of this records management system to standardize SIU data management is strongly encouraged.

**Physical Locations:** During the site visits, each worksite was assessed regarding the ability to provide adequate team co-location, as well as provide for appropriate meeting and interview space. The lack of adequate team space remains as a barrier to full co-location of MDT members at a number of the sites (see unit site visit reviews). Unfortunately, some units did secure independent work site space for themselves, but that occurred before a fully functioning MDT could be consolidated. Consequently, the work sites were underutilized and even became barriers to development of a cohesive MDT. The range of success in the area runs the gamut from no dedicated space at all to the CUSI location that provides exemplary work space for all members of the MDT. That being said, most SIU have, or have access to appropriate working space to fulfill the needs of the unit (although fully co-locating units would require more space at nearly all locations).

**Procedures:** Each SIU was also asked about unit procedures relating to individual case reviews, peer review of forensic interviews, and training goals. Training, required and received, was consistent among the units with agreement that the availability of specialized training is important for all MDT partners. Timely access to specialized training was noted as a continuing challenge. Case reviews occurred in most SIU as a monthly practice, but regularly scheduled peer reviews of forensic interviews is not a standardized practice at this time.

**Records Management:** The absence of a standardized records management system creates difficulty in conducting any meaningful analysis of SIU activity. Multiple data systems are utilized by police agencies, DCF, and the Child Advocacy Centers. While gathering data requested for this report, it became apparent that a single, standardized, records management system should be endorsed and used to achieve a consistent and reliable measure of SIU work product. Some statistical information requested was simply not retrievable with existing records management tools. Other data was unreliable for unit to unit comparisons.

Research into the NCATrak system (used for all CAC reporting provided to the National Children's Alliance) revealed that this system has the ability to provide useful statistical reporting information from all MDT components. A host of standard management reports are available from the system, and there is a reasonable ability to provide customized reports in most instances. The reasonable expense to use this system avoids the unnecessary expenditure of time and money to re-create a records management system that bridges the various disparate records systems in use around the state. A majority of CAC already use NCATrak for reporting and have indicated a willingness to make administrative changes to accommodate the data entry necessary for their respective SIU/CAC.



**2010 US Census Bureau  
-VERMONT-  
&  
FY12 - 1st Quarter Statistics by SIU**

County	Population	As % of total	Land Area (Sq Mi)	Persons per Sq Mi	Served by SIU
Addison	36821	5.88%	766.33	48	non-operational
Bennington	37125	5.90%	674.98	55	BCSIU
Caledonia	31227	4.99%	648.86	48.1	Caledonia/Southern Essex
Chittenden	156545	25.01%	536.58	291.7	CUSI
Essex	6306	1%	663.6	9.5	Caledonia/Orleans
Franklin	47746	7.63%	633.71	75.3	NUSI
Grand Isle	6970	1.11%	81.81	85.2	NUSI
Lamoille	24475	3.91%	458.8	53.3	LCSIU
Orange	28936	4.62%	687.03	42.1	OCSIU
Orleans	27231	4.35%	693.27	39.3	Orleans/Northern Essex
Rutland	61642	9.85%	929.82	66.3	ROSI
Washington	59534	9.51%	687.23	86.6	OUR House
Windham	44513	7.11%	785.31	56.7	Se-USI
Windsor	56670	9.05%	969.34	58.5	WNSI
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>625741</b>	<b>99.92%</b>	<b>9216.67</b>	<b>72.54285714</b>	

  

SIU/CAC	New Cases	Victims < 18	Victims 18 or >	Offenders < 18	Offenders 18 or >	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	Other Abuse	Charges Filed by Age of Victim
Addison**									
Bennington	35	28	5	7	22	28	5	0	4 - Child; 3 - Adult
Caledonia/S.Essex	25	5	0	1	4	4	1	0	1 - Child
Chittenden	91	36	55	10	38	53	4	9	2 - Child; 16 - Adult
Franklin/Grand Isle	61	46	15	18	37	57	4	0	12 - Child; 4 - Adult
Lamoille	49	20	27	5	39	15	24	10	3 - Child; 21 - Adult
Orange	50	18	2	6	12	16	4	0	1 - Child; 1 - Adult
Orleans/N. Essex	22	8	0	1	7	13	5	0	1 - Child
Rutland	37	30	7	17	14	36	1	0	2 - Child; 1 - Adult
Washington	39	39	0	16	14	30	3	6	2 - Child
Windham	26	25	1	2	21	17	8	1	6 - Child
Windsor	52	46	6	10	31	48	2	4	9 - Child
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43 - Child; 46 - Adult</b>

\*\*\* No statistics as established SIU

MDT -Components	CUSI - Chittenden	ROSI - Rutland	NUSI - Franklin & GI	Bennington	Orange	Orleans/Northern Essex	Lamoille	Windham	OUR House - Washington	Windsor	Caledonia/Southern Essex	ACUSI - Addison							
Police	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red							
DCF	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow							
Prosecution	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green							
Medical	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red							
Mental Health	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red							
Victim Advocate	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red							
CAC Accreditation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Red							
NCA Trak	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red							
Co-location	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red							
Team Space	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red							
Case Reviews	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green							
Forensic Interview	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red							
BFI/AFI/Other	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red							
501 c (3)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red							
<b>LEGEND</b>																			
<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #90EE90; width: 30px;"></td> <td>75-100%</td> <td rowspan="3"> <b>Ratings are provided as a means of comparison and are not intended as grading the respective SIU.</b>            •If a component was mostly achieved, it was rated green.            •If a component was somewhat achieved, it was rated yellow.            •If a component was not started or significantly not achieving the intent of MDT function, it was rated red.         </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #FFD700; width: 30px;"></td> <td>50-75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #FF0000; width: 30px;"></td> <td>&lt; 50%</td> </tr> </table>														75-100%	<b>Ratings are provided as a means of comparison and are not intended as grading the respective SIU.</b> •If a component was mostly achieved, it was rated green. •If a component was somewhat achieved, it was rated yellow. •If a component was not started or significantly not achieving the intent of MDT function, it was rated red.		50-75%		< 50%
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	< 50%																		

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:** *Bennington County Child Advocacy Center & Special Investigations Unit (BCCAC/SIU)*

Executive Director Patti Randall (802) 442-5107

**Geographic Area Covered:** Bennington County

**Governance:** Non-Profit 501C3 - Governed by an Executive Board of Directors/Bylaws and Managed by a .7 FTE Executive Director

**Brief History:** In 1989, Bernadette Thompson, with the Department of Children and Families, and Gary Briggs, a dedicated Law Enforcement Officer formed the Bennington County Association Against Child Abuse (BCAACA). The first multidisciplinary team meeting was held in February, 1989. The BCAACA obtained its non-profit status in 1993 and began to occupy donated space in the basement of the Bennington Superior Court building. In 2005, United Counseling Service became the umbrella agency for the BCAACA and the center was renamed the Bennington County Child Advocacy Center (BCCAC). The BCCAC became an associate member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA) in June 2006. Bennington Police Department's Detective Larry Cole was assigned to the new Special Victims Unit in 2007 and Detective Tyler Burgess of the Vermont State Police was assigned to the CAC/SVU in 2009. Current Director Patti Randall and Case Coordinator Lori Yunger were also hired in 2009. National Children's Alliance (NCA) accreditation was received in October 2009. In May 2010, the Bennington County Child Advocacy Center & Special Investigations Unit (BCCAC/SIU) moved to its present location on Main Street in Bennington.

**Current Status:** BCCAC/SIU is currently located at 439 Main Street, Bennington, VT. The unit has a co-located staff of two onsite investigators (one Vermont State Trooper and one Bennington Police Detective), a part time executive director, a full time case coordinator and a part time administrative assistant. These positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, state grants and fundraising. As a non-profit, BCCAC/SIU conducts various fundraisers throughout the year including our annual Poker Tournament sponsored by the Elks Club in Bennington.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$475,276.76
	Federal Grant (VOCA-ARRA).....	\$ 0.00
	State Grants (SIU, VCA, VOCA).....	\$111,640.00
	<u>Contributions.....</u>	<u>\$4,772.00</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget.....</i></b>	<b><i>\$591,688.76</i></b>

**Future Needs:** The BCCAC/SIU, overall, has experienced an increase in the number of cases investigated: 110 cases in 2007; 116 cases in 2008; 133 cases in 2009; 96 cases in 2010 and 85 cases for the first 10 months of 2011). With the steady number of cases, the BCCAC/SIU will need an increase in staffing across all disciplines as well as additional space to accommodate growing staff. It is our hope to acquire a space all our own that is handicapped accessible and can eventually house a member from each discipline. The BCCAC/SIU continues to explore the possibility of co-locating an investigator from the Department for Children and Families and a law enforcement officer from the Bennington County Sheriff's Department; we have come up against funding and other administrative issues. It is also our hope to eventually have an Outreach Coordinator to develop and lead community education, communication and outreach.

MDT -Components	Bennington	COMMENTS
Police		1-VSP; 1-BPD; co-located at Bennington CAC
DCF		Not co-located; 4 investigators rotate to provide full-time equivalent
Prosecution		Prosecutor dedicated to SIU cases; not co-located but nearby; active w/MDT
Medical		S.A.N.E. available thru hospital; not co-located but actively involved
Mental Health		Multiple providers including school counselors; MDT participant;
Victim Advocate		Coordinated effort among SA's advocate; CAC advocate; and DV advocate resources
CAC Accreditation		YES
NCA Trak		YES; data entry by admin staff
Primary Co-location		Law enforcement and CAC staff; other MDT partners are nearby
Team Space		Available for child/adult case work
Case Reviews		Conducted every 2 weeks at SA's office
Forensic Interview		Conducted quarterly at CAC; LE & DCF review of victim and offender interviews
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		LE/DCF receive basic and advanced forensic interview training
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place
<p><b>Strengths:</b>  Well established working relationships compensate for limited co-location of MDT partners  Strong networking in county provides a sustainment of team cohesiveness  Well refined administrative processes for case management and review</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  Desire to include DCF member(s) at co-located site (currently a good working relationship, this is viewed as next step)  Size limitation at current CAC site precludes further co-location efforts beyond adding DCF partner  Community understanding of SIU/CAC is an area being improved upon</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>  Continue support of community outreach/education efforts  Continue to serve as role model/mentor to developing SIU/CAC units  Improve background diversity of board to provide opportunity for sustainment of funding</p>		

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:**                    *Caledonia Special Investigations Unit, Inc.*  
David Frey, Interim Director (802) 334-6002

**Geographic Area Covered:** Caledonia and Southern Essex Counties

**Governance:**                    As of September 2011, the Caledonia Special Investigations Unit is an independent non-profit corporation governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of the local executives of our partner agencies. The SIU is currently managed by an Interim Executive Director (recruitment for a permanent director is underway).

**Brief History:**                    In 2008, the Caledonia and Essex County State’s Attorneys partnered with two other county prosecutors to form a multi-county model called NEKSIU. A Coordinator was hired in December of 2008 through a SIU grant. At the suggestion of the SIU Grants Board, Caledonia/Southern Essex established its own non-profit corporation in September, transitioning the advisory board into a governing board. A contract investigator from the St. Johnsbury Police Department has been working with a Vermont State Trooper assigned to the SIU since 2009. The investigators continue to provide a coordinated response to reports of sex crimes and serious cases of child abuse.

**Current Status:**                    We have interview space within the local Department for Children and Families office in St. Johnsbury. We also leased two offices for our investigators in the building where the Caledonia County State’s Attorney is located – these offices were not used and the lease was terminated in 2011. We are actively seeking a new facility to house the SIU. We maintain our data in the NCATrak system. Currently, the majority of personnel are provided in-kind by our partner departments and agencies. The contracted position with the St. Johnsbury Police Department and the Detective Trooper are the only full-time positions at the SIU. We hold monthly team meetings with the prosecutor, victims advocate, Department for Children and Families, Department of Corrections, ChildSafe Program of Vermont, and law enforcement agencies. We continue to respond to cases of sexual violence and serious child abuse.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff).....	\$195,967
	State Grants (Program and Law Enf.).....	<u>\$100,680</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget</i></b> .....	<b><i>\$296,647</i></b>

**Future Needs:**                    We are developing a protocol for SIU investigations and are exploring options for facilities to house the SIU. We are also working to determine how we can assure access to mental health resources for our clients.

MDT -Components	Caledonia/Southern Essex	COMMENTS
Police		1-VSP Detective Trooper; 1-StJPD Detective; supplemented in Essex County by Sheriff's Dept; not co-located
DCF		Divided by 2 DCF Districts; MDT participation, but not co-located
Prosecution		SA is primary with assistance from 2 deputy SA's as needed
Medical		S.A.N.E. available at hospital; adult and pediatric service; MDT participant
Mental Health		Service coordinated by SA victim advocate as needed; not MDT participant
Victim Advocate		1-full time; 1- part time, both at SA's office
CAC Accreditation		Lack of space for CAC at present; exploring alternate options with NCAC re: satellite designation with Orleans as primary CAC
NCA Trak		DOES NOT USE THIS RESOURCE/UNAVAILABLE
Primary Co-location		SA's office is location for MDT meetings; currently, no designated site for co-location of MDT
Team Space		Each member of MDT works from traditional work sites; no co-location
Case Reviews		Monthly at SA's office; this space accomodates both board meetings and MDT case reviews
Forensic Interview		Reviews not conducted at this time
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		Law enforcement and DCF have basic & advance training; Prosecutors interested/available for advanced training (to be determined)
501 c (3)		Registered as non-profit with Secretary of State; 501 c (3) status pending fund raising for application
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Strong support from State's Attorney and law enforcement as MDT concept develops</li> <li>•Ability to maintain networking ties in spite of adequate team space</li> <li>•Interim Executive Director has significant experience working with MDT model in Vermont</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Newly established as independent SIU; "growing pains"</li> <li>•No suitable CAC alternative available at this time</li> <li>•Lack of physical co-location requires strong individual commitment to succeed</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Explore options for development of CAC resource as integral part of MDT</li> <li>•Obtain 501 c (3) status to assist with sustainment of funding options</li> <li>•Continue to foster networking ties with stakeholders in lieu of co-location at single work site</li> </ul>		

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:**                    *Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI)*  
     *Chittenden Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC)*  
     Executive Director-Kristine Bickford (802) 652-0391

**Geographic Area Covered:**    Chittenden County

**Governance:**                        Non-Profit 501C3 - Governed by a 9 Member Board of Directors/Bylaws

**Brief History:**    *The Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI)* was created in 1992 as a multi agency task force to provide criminal investigation services in response to sexual assault and other serious sexual offenses, severe child abuse and neglect. The primary focus remains on meeting the emotional needs of adult and child victims. CUSI defined what is now known as a true multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approach, investigating crimes of this nature.

CUSI is comprised of eight specially trained police detectives from various Chittenden County Police Departments and works in tandem with the *Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC)* formed in 2003, a 501c3 nonprofit entity offering a range of services to children and families affected by these crimes. The CAC provides vital support to child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse primarily through its advocacy and after care services.

**Current Status**    CUSI is currently located at 50 Cherry Street-Suite 102 in Burlington, VT. CUSI/CAC is located adjacent to the courthouse and State’s Attorney’s Office. The Unit has a staff of eight onsite investigators (one lieutenant, two detectives from BPD, one UVM investigator, one Vermont State Trooper, one detective each from Colchester, Essex and South Burlington), a dedicated prosecutor, and dedicated victim advocate, full time DCF investigator, full time Executive Director and a part time in-house therapist. These positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, town contributions and state grants. As a non-profit, the CAC receives private donations and CUSI receives funding from numerous municipalities throughout the county. During its 19 years of existence, CUSI has investigated more than 5,750 cases of sexual violence and serious child abuse, averaging approximately 350 cases a year.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$158,293.00
	Grant Revenue.....	\$155,276.00
	<u>Town Contributions.....</u>	<u>\$837,578.00</u>
	<b>Total Budget.....</b>	<b>\$1,151,147.00</b>

**Future Needs:**    We have computer issues to address and therefore need to purchase computer new IT equipment in order to maintain a well-functioning computer system. We are also in the process of researching Courthouse Dogs to be present at the Unit for interviews, depositions, therapy, trial prep, and everyday care for in house staff as well.

MDT -Components	CUSI - Chittenden	COMMENTS
Police		8-police investigators co-located at unit: 3-BurlPD, 1 each from UVM, VSP, Colchester, Essex, & So.Burlington
DCF		1-DCF staff member co-located at unit
Prosecution		1-prosecutor (not co-located but in same building and extensive history of working directly with unit)
Medical		S.A.N.E. (includes pediatric) located at University Health Ctr/Fletcher-Allen; active involvement w/MDT
Mental Health		Therapy room on site; contract therapist provides MDT service
Victim Advocate		State position from SA's office; co-located and handles child and adult support; dedicated to SIU/CAC, but available to assist other VA in the main office
CAC Accreditation		NCAC Accreditation
NCA Trak		Use for reporting to NCAC
Primary Co-location		Single site used for co-location with limited exceptions as noted above
Team Space		Available for use of all MDT staff; locked access
Case Reviews		Monthly MDT members, Corrections, and others as required; conducted at SIU/CAC site
Forensic Interview		Interviews selected for uniqueness; done before charging; ideally done monthly in rotation with case reviews
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		LE & DCF receive basic interview training within 1st month of assignment w/advance training to follow; Prosecutor has received national level training and strong interest in development of collaborative training opportunities in VT
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longterm, well established MDT that encompasses the unit cohesiveness others strive to achieve</li> <li>• Established community recognition and support (including county wide funding mechanism)</li> <li>• SIU/CAC worksite accomodates all MDT members for support of child and adult victims</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of "power board" to pursue/manage fund raising concerns</li> <li>• Establish suitable EAP/wellness program for unit members (in addition to what exists from home agencies)</li> <li>• Managing turnover and ensuring the selection of properly qualified replacements</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to serve as role model/mentor to developing SIU/CAC units</li> <li>• Develop outreach of information to county police administrators/legislative members/potential benefactors</li> <li>• Refine the recruitment/selection process for investigators/interviewers (law enforcement &amp; DCF)</li> </ul>		



## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:** *Northwest Unit for Special Investigations (NUSI)  
(Child Advocacy Center)*

Executive Director Robert White (802) 524-7961

**Geographic Area Covered:** Franklin and Grand Isle Counties.

**Governance:** Non-Profit 501C3 - Governed by a 12 Member Board of Directors/Bylaws and Managed by a .5FTE Executive Director.

**Brief History:** The Northwest Unit for Special Investigations (NUSI) was created in 1995 upon the reassignment of a Vermont State Trooper from the St. Albans Barracks to the Franklin County State's Attorney's Office. Then State's Attorney Howard Vanbenthuisen, dedicated a prosecutor and victim advocate from his office, creating the region's first multidisciplinary team. This team's primary responsibility's included the investigation, prosecution and victim services for crimes involving sexual assault/abuse and other serious crimes against children. NUSI obtained its non-profit status in October of 1995, and became a Child Advocacy Center (CAC), accredited by the National Children's Alliance (NCA) in April 2000.

**Current Status:** NUSI is currently located at 5 Lemnah Drive, St. Albans VT., as a wing attached to the Franklin County State's Attorney's Office. The unit has a co-located staff of three onsite investigators (two state troopers and one deputy sheriff), a dedicated part time prosecutor, a dedicated part time victim advocate, a full time administrative assistant, a part time executive director and a part time victim therapist. These positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, federal and state grants. As a non-profit, NUSI receives funding from numerous municipalities throughout the two county region. During its first 16 years of existence, NUSI has investigated more than 3,100 cases of sexual violence and serious child abuse, averaging approximately 194 cases a year.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$243,092
	Federal Grant (Rural Justice, NCA, STOP)....	\$ 87,204
	State Grants (SIU,CAC).....	\$112,342
	<u>Municipal Contributions.....</u>	<u>\$ 19,190</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget.....</i></b>	<b><i>\$461,828</i></b>

**Future Needs:** NUSI continues to experience an upward swing in the number and complexity of cases investigated. Trends include, younger victims, social media and internet related crimes/interactions. With these trends NUSI has reached and at times have exceeded its capacity to adequately manage its case load. If the upward trends continue, an increase in space and staffing across all disciplines will be needed. NUSI is working with the Department for Children and Families to co-locate an investigator with the rest of the multidisciplinary team. Work is also underway with the Grand Isle County Sheriff to set up a satellite office in their facility to increase multidisciplinary team availability and victim services to that area.

MDT - Components	NUSI - Franklin & GI	COMMENTS
Police		2-VSP (partial STOP funding); 1-32hr/wk position from Franklin County Sheriff's Dept; co-located at unit
DCF		Covered by rotation of DCF staff; not co-located at unit
Prosecution		1-Deputy SA covers child/adult cases from Franklin County and provides assistance to Grand Isle County SA; SA's office adjoins worksite
Medical		24-hr on call service; located at local hospital; not co-located but MDT participant
Mental Health		Office space available for therapist (part-time hours/private contractor)
Victim Advocate		1-VA from SA's office; co-located at unit
CAC Accreditation		NCAC Accreditation
NCA Trak		Use for reporting to NCAC; recommends as standardized report for SIUs
Primary Co-location		Site space available; DCF & medical are only non-co-located MDT components
Team Space		Secure access w/ space for child and adult support needs
Case Reviews		Monthly reviews by MDT; chaired by prosecutor
Forensic Interview		Conducted monthly by DCF and police investigators (no supervisors for sake of peer review process); checklist in place for review guide; random selection of cases
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		LE/DCF have received basic and advanced forensic interview training; prosecutor has national level training
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place

**Strengths:**

- Well established MDT that has nearly all team members co-located in an adequately sized/equipped location
- Strong networking in county provides a sustainment of team cohesiveness
- Well refined administrative processes for case management and review

**Challenges:**

- Desire to include DCF member(s) at co-located site (currently a good working relationship, this is viewed as next step)
- Need for satellite office for investigators/team members to use in Grand Isle County
- Difficulty incorporating DV cases into the existing MDT model

**Recommendations:**

- Develop working relationship with Grand Isle County Sheriff on satellite office concept (ongoing at this time)
- Continue to serve as role model/mentor to developing SIU/CAC units
- Improve background diversity of board to provide opportunity for sustainment of funding

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU:** *Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit*

**Geographic Area Covered:** Lamoille County

**Governance:** Non-Profit 501©3, governed by a Board of Directors/Bylaws

**Brief History:** The Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit was created in 2007 and represents a continued collaborative effort on the part of the State’s Attorney’s Office, Vermont State Police, Lamoille County Sheriff’s Department, Morristown Police Department, Stowe Police Department, and the Clarina Howard Nichols Center, and the Department for Children and Family Services.

Prior to 2007, Lamoille County had the benefit of a domestic and sexual violence response team comprised of a prosecutor, an investigator, and a victim advocate. The team had been funded by grants allocated under the Violence against Women’s Act, in addition to individual contributions made by area law enforcement agencies. The Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit is an extension of that team and includes a dedicated facility for conducting forensic interviews of victims of sexual crimes. The current funding for the Unit includes continued VAWA funding as well as Vermont State SIU Grant funding.

The Unit’s primary responsibilities include investigating, prosecuting and providing victim services for crimes involving domestic and sexual assault/abuse and other serious crimes against children. The Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit obtained its non-profit status in December of 2008.

**Current Status:** The Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit is currently located at 252 Main Street in Hyde Park, VT and includes an interview facility and conference area attached to the Lamoille County State’s Attorney’s Office. The Unit has co-located staff including a part-time Prosecutor, a part-time Victim Advocate, a part-time Executive Director, and a part-time Administrative Assistant. The LCSIU has two full time detectives.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	Federal Grant (STOP).....\$129,691.72
	State Grant (SIU).....\$ 54,035.00
	<u>Other Contributions.....\$ 110,921.59</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget.....\$294,648.31</i></b>

**Future Needs:** The Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit has a dedicated facility for conducting forensic interviews of victims of sexual crimes. A full-time investigator is assigned from the Lamoille County Sheriff’s Department, and a Vermont State Police detective is assigned to the unit as well. The Assigned investigators, in addition to other local Law Enforcement Agencies will continue to receive specialized training relating to the investigation of domestic and sexual violence crimes, as well as severe child abuse. The future needs of the Unit will be best be served by continued funding of the current positions allowing for the continued application of a coordinated community response to the investigation and prosecution of domestic and sexual violence crimes, and severe child abuse.

MDT -Components	Lamoille	COMMENTS
Police		1-VSP Detective; 1-Lamoille County Sheriff's Deputy (includes STOP funds); co-located at unit site
DCF		Covered by rotation of DCF staff; not co-located at unit
Prosecution		1-Deputy SA (SIU/DV); co-located at unit
Medical		S.A.N.E. At local hospital; not co-located but MDT relies on this service; pediatric service available at Fletcher Allen or St Albans
Mental Health		Therapist is available; not co-located due to limited demand for service; space is available as needed
Victim Advocate		1-VA is STOP funded and co-located at unit
CAC Accreditation		Not currently accredited; board is uncertain of benefits
NCA Trak		NOT USED
Primary Co-location		Secure site located with SA's office - DCF is not co-located but has access to unit as needed; medical and mental health are not co-located but available as needed
Team Space		Can accommodate child and adult support; shared space is separated for security and confidentiality
Case Reviews		Conducted as MDT on a monthly basis (or as needed)
Forensic Interview		ad hoc reviews; no regular schedule for peer review of interviews
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		basic interview training for investigators as a minimum; additional training planned for SA, VA, DCF with topics to be determined
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place

**Strengths:**

- Experienced DV unit that expanded to fulfill SIU role
- Strong working network depended upon to overcome issues related to co-location shortfalls
- Being centered with SA's office serves the strengthen a modest MDT size

**Challenges:**

- No NCAC accreditation for CAC (self described as functional equivalent w/o accreditation)
- Need to improve information flow about SIU to community (possible benefactors)
- Executive Director serves dual role as unit prosecutor

**Recommendations:**

- Expand efforts to involve community with SIU (awareness and support)
- Separate the Executive Director's role from unit prosecutor; even 1/2 time position would improve ability to plan for future
- Consider targeted expansion of Board of Directors to include community members with skills to add to sustainability efforts

## State of Vermont SIU 2011 -2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:**                    *Orange County Special Investigations*  
Sheri Englert, Executive Director

**Geographic Area Covered:** Orange County.

**Governance:**                        Governed by an 8 Member Advisory Board operating under a fiscal agent agreement with the Orange County Sheriff.

Managed by an Executive Director.

**Brief History:**                    In 2008, the Orange County State’s Attorneys partnered with three other county prosecutors to form a multi-county model called NEKSIU. A Coordinator was hired in December of 2008 through a state-funded grant. The Orange County SIU has been developing its multi-disciplinary team case reviews. A contract investigator from the Sheriff’s Department was hired in 2009 and has been handling cases from Orange County. She has been providing a coordinated response to reports of sex crimes and severe cases of child abuse. In 2010, under the direction of the grant board, the Orange County unit began exploring the creation of its own 501c3. Early in 2011, the Orange County SIU became a separate entity with 2 full time Investigators and a full time Administrative Assistant/ Executive Director. The facility at 299 Main Street, Chelsea, VT, houses a “friendly” environment for interviews. The Interview room is equipped with specialized and sensitive audio/visual recording devices.

**Current Status:**                    The Orange County Special Investigations Unit continues to complete the requirement to obtain full status of a Child Advocacy Center as set forth by the National Child Advocacy Center. We hold monthly coordination meetings with the prosecutor, victims advocate, DCF, and Probation and Parole, law enforcement agencies, Safeline and have recently brought the Clara Martin Center to our MDT group.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$ 23,396.93
	State Grants (SIU,CAC).....	<u>\$150,236.40</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget</i></b> .....	<b><i>\$173,633.33</i></b>

**Future Needs:**                    The districting model for state services leaves Orange County as one of the most divided areas in the state. With three district offices for DCF the number of DCF Investigators we are coordinating with becomes very challenging. We propose to have a DCF worker assigned to cover Orange County cases who could be co-located at our facility. We are confident that such a model would facilitate more affective services to the victims and their families.

MDT -Components	Orange	COMMENTS
Police		2 - Orange County Sheriff's Dept Deputies (SIU Law Enforcement Grant funding); No VSP resource available directly
DCF		Responsibility split among 3 DCF districts; no dedicated staff member for co-location at SIU site
Prosecution		SA/Dep SA share role; not co-located but SA's office is nearby; active in MDT role
Medical		Resources available at 3 hospitals (Dartmouth/CVMC/Gifford); limited access to S.A.N.E practitioner due to geography of county
Mental Health		Resources available at Clara Martin Center; no specific space afforded at SIU work site
Victim Advocate		SA's VA and Safeline (DV cases) provide this resource; not co-located
CAC Accreditation		Have NCAC "developing and expanding" funding to achieve accreditation
NCA Trak		Use for reporting to NCAC; access granted as part of "D&E" funding above
Primary Co-location		2-Law enforcement investigators and Exec Director only
Team Space		Newly developed work site used for interviews and MDT meetings; support available for child and adult victims
Case Reviews		Monthly with MDT at SIU work site
Forensic Interview		No regular schedule for peer review; reserved for unusual circumstances
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		Basic and Advanced interview courses; Forensic Mentor
501 c (3)		Registered non-profit thru VT Secy State/501 c (3) process pending

**Strengths:**

- Commitment by State's Attorney and Orange County Sheriff to support MDT development
- Development of SIU worksite in proximity to SA/Sheriff/Court (new effort)

**Challenges:**

- Limited size of SIU worksite
- Numerous multi-district divisions for state agencies (3-DCF districts; 3-VSP stations)
- Support of victims requires flexibility among all stakeholders

**Recommendations:**

- Continue development of NCAC accreditation as CAC
- Complete 501 c (3) non-profit status
- Continue work with DCF and VSP to remove barriers that limit full support of the county based SIU model

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:**                    *Orleans County Child Advocacy Center, Inc.*  
David Frey, Interim Director (802) 334-6002

**Geographic Area Covered:** Orleans and Northern Essex Counties

**Governance:**                    The Orleans County Child Advocacy Center (OCCAC) is an independent IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and is currently managed by a contracted Interim Executive Director.

**Brief History:**                    The multi-disciplinary team from Orleans County has been working cooperatively for over 14 years. They began efforts to create a Child Advocacy Center in 1996. They formed a board of directors, created an IRS 501(c)(3) corporation, and created an interview room in donated space. The previous team was unable to obtain funding to keep site operations continuing and efforts became stagnant. The team meetings of the partners continued monthly as Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) meetings at the local State’s Attorney’s office. In 2008, the Orleans County State’s Attorneys partnered with three other county prosecutors to form a multi-county model called NEKSIU. A Coordinator was hired in December of 2008 through a state-funded grant. A contract investigator from the Newport Police Department was hired in 2009 and has been working with a Vermont State Trooper assigned to the SIU. They continue to provide a coordinated response to reports of sex crimes and severe cases of child abuse.

**Current Status:**                    Our facility is adequate and functional, houses the two co-located law enforcement investigators, and has office space for the director and administrator. The remaining members of the multidisciplinary team are provided in-kind by our partner agencies. The contracted position with the Newport Police Department and the Trooper are currently the only full-time positions at the SIU. We lost our previous director/coordinator and administrator during the last year. Plans are in the works to replace the administrator (to handle case management, bookkeeping, and statistical data) and the position should be filled by the end of the fiscal year.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff).....	\$168,850
	State Grants (Program and Law Enf.).....	120,716
	<b><i>Total Budget</i></b> .....	<b><i>\$289,566</i></b>

**Future Needs:**                    Our next priorities are to hire an administrator to handle routine day-to-day operations and data entry, and encourage DCF to dedicate an investigative social worker to the SIU who could be co-located at the facility. Our other priorities for the coming year are to determine how to best meet our clients’ mental health needs and to engage mental and medical health professionals as routine participants on our multidisciplinary team.

MDT -Components	Orleans/Northern Essex	COMMENTS
Police		1-VSP Detective Trooper; 1 - Newport PD Detective; supplemented in Essex County by Sheriff's Dept; co-located at SIU site (2-full time detectives)
DCF		Assigned by DCF on rotational basis; not co-located but reside in building next door
Prosecution		1-Dep SA as primary for child and sexual assault cases; not co-located but office is nearby
Medical		S.A.N.E available locally; outside consultation for child cases; MDT participant
Mental Health		Available thru court contracted resource; changeover may be occurring in contract
Victim Advocate		Victim Advocacy primarily from SA's office; adult & child support; not co-located
CAC Accreditation		CAC accreditation lapsed; currently exploring reaccreditation and options for Caledonia county inclusion
NCA Trak		Resource in place from previous CAC status
Primary Co-location		Law enforcement and Exec Director at SIU worksite; MDT partners in proximity
Team Space		Space is available to conduct MDT interviews/case reviews/meetings
Case Reviews		Conducted monthly at SIU or SA's office
Forensic Interview		No set schedule; conducted as needed
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		Basic and advanced training for LE/DCF; national level training for prosecutor and investigators as well as victim advocates
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status still in place from earlier SIU/CAC status
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Well established work site supports MDT functions as required</li> <li>•Interim Executive Director has significant experience working with MDT model in Vermont</li> <li>•Experienced MDT membership/participation</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Turnover of experienced investigators/interviewers</li> <li>•Need to establish unit protocols to ensure best practice and consistency</li> <li>•Solidify independent SIU status (was part of region wide SIU earlier)</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop formal unit operating procedures (protocol)</li> <li>•Establish transition policy/procedure to manage staff turnover in MDT</li> <li>•Resolve CAC status for Orleans unit and explore options for working with Caledonia for CAC resource</li> </ul>		



## State of Vermont SIU 2010-2011 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:**                    *Rutland Office for Special Investigations (ROSI)*  
*Child First Advocacy Center (CFAC)*  
Executive Director Wendy Loomis 802.779.0200

**Geographic Area Covered:** Rutland County

**Governance:**                        Non-Profit 501C3 - Governed by a 9 Member Board of  
Directors/Bylaws and Managed by a .75FTE Executive Director

**Brief History:**                        One in four children will be sexually abused before reaching their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. CFAC was designed to combat this problem utilizing both preventative and reactive models of intervention. In 1998, a Rutland County multidisciplinary task force convened and determined that a child advocacy center was the most comprehensive and effective solution. In 2001, CFAC received non-profit, 501c3 status. Since April, 2004, CFAC has been a fully accredited member of the *National Children's Alliance*. In 2007 the Rutland County state's Attorney's Office applied for recognition and funding to establish a Special Investigation Unit for Rutland County (ROSI). Presently, the SIU and CAC operate in tandem, serving victims of sex crimes and child victims of severe physical abuse throughout Rutland County.

**Current Status:**                        CFAC/ROSI is conveniently located in downtown Rutland in the historic opera house building. State offices which house DCF and the State's Attorney's office are across the street (the dedicated part time prosecutor and victim advocate are both located there).The unit has a co-located staff including two onsite investigators (one VSP assigned trooper-detective and one Rutland City P.D. detective), a DCF investigator, a .75FTE administrative assistant/community coordinator, a .75FTE executive director. The positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, federal and state grants. We also receive donations and local United Way funding. CFAC/ROSI investigates approximately 130 cases annually.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility)	\$295,314.00
	Federal Grant (NCA)	10,000.00
	State Grants (SIU,CAC)	101,577.00
	<u>Other</u>	<u>2,000.00</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget</i></b>	<b><i>\$408,891.00</i></b>

**Future Needs:**                        During the past 4 years CFAC/ROSI has experienced a 20-25% increase in cases for each subsequent year. Investigations included some domestic violence, family violence and vulnerable adult cases since co-location. CFAC/ROSI is above capacity for investigations-our detectives and investigator carry exponential caseloads by comparison to their colleagues. To adequately respond, an increase in staffing across disciplines is required. This will dictate space constraints as well.

MDT -Components	ROSI - Rutland	COMMENTS
Police		1- VSP; 1- RPD; co-located at SIU/CAC
DCF		1-DCF co-located at SIU/CAC
Prosecution		Dedicated - not co-located but across street from SIU/CAC
Medical		S.A.N.E - Hospital; close working relationship; had exam space at CAC (being changed due to work concerns; teleconferencing capacity being developed)
Mental Health		Referrals done as needed; active participation in MDT
Victim Advocate		SA-Victim Advocate located at SA's office; seamless handoff from CAC advocacy to SA VA upon filing of charges
CAC Accreditation		YES
NCA Trak		YES; data entry conducted by Exec Director
Primary Co-location		LE/DCF/CAC; MDT partners nearby and actively involved
Team Space		Available to serve child/adult needs w/adequate space for existing staff
Case Reviews		Conducted on a two-week cycle
Forensic Interview		Not pre-scheduled due to workload; post-interview review usually conducted at that time by participating MDT partners
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		LE/DCF/Prosecutor have received basic and advanced training; eager for additional training
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place

**Strengths:**

Well established MDT that has nearly all team members co-located in an adequately sized/equipped location  
 Strong networking in county provides a sustainment of team cohesiveness  
 Team cohesiveness (credited to co-location of primary MDT partners)

**Challenges:**

Workload perceived as more than current staff can appropriately handle; too busy  
 Staff turnover /burnout concerns  
 Need for "resource guide" for prosecutors re: expert testimony

**Recommendations:**

Continue to serve as role model/mentor to developing SIU/CAC units  
 Improve background diversity of board to provide opportunity for sustainment of funding  
 Explore funding /partnering opportunities to improve investigator staffing

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

Name of SIU/CAC: ***O.U.R. House of Central Vermont, Inc.***  
Executive Director: Will Roberts (802) 476-8825

Geographic Area Covered: Washington County

Governance: Independent 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation - Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, and managed by an Executive Director.

Brief History: OUR House was Vermont's first children's advocacy center, established in 1989 to serve Washington County and the surrounding area. OUR House is a charter member of National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers (now the National Children's Alliance) and has remained an accredited or associate member ever since. OUR House became a special investigative unit in 2008, and a full-time Detective Trooper was assigned to work out of the facility in late 2009.

Current Status: OUR House has been at its present location, 38 Summer Street in Barre - adjacent to the Washington County criminal and family courts, since 1995. Although the unit has an active and viable multi-disciplinary team, we only have one co-located law enforcement investigator. We are in the process of negotiating with the Department for Children and Families to have an investigator dedicated to the unit, as well as encouraging our prosecution and advocates to spend time in the facility. We are limited by our size to a maximum of three co-located team members. All unit positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, federal and state grants. As a non-profit, OUR House engages in various fundraising events.

<u>Current Budget:</u>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$235,045
	Federal Grant (VOCA) .....	30,000
	State Grants (SIU).....	76,588
	<u>Fundraising.....</u>	<u>19,633</u>
	<b>Total Budget.....</b>	<b>\$361,266</b>

Future Needs: Aside from ongoing funding to assure that OUR House can retain the staffing needed to support the special investigative unit, OUR House's most critical needs are funding to enable local law enforcement to dedicate an officer to the unit and funding to acquire a facility that is large enough to allow simultaneous co-location of two law enforcement investigators, one DCF investigator, one advocate, and one prosecutor.

MDT -Components	OUR House - Washington	COMMENTS
Police		VSP-1 detective trooper; detectives available as needed from Montpelier PD & Barre City PD primarily; other PD's as needed; only VSP trooper located at site.
DCF		DCF staff assigned as needed; not co-located on site, but nearby; case load determines participation in MDT.
Prosecution		~90% of cases handled by one prosecutor; not co-located on site, but nearby
Medical		S.A.N.E. available at local hospital; developing MDT relationship.
Mental Health		Private counseling resource is utilized with space available at MDT site or off-site as necessary
Victim Advocate		Victim Advocate provided by State's Attorney's office and Sexual Assault Crisis Team is also actively involved for support; not co-located, but near by.
CAC Accreditation		Re-accreditation in progress; no date determined
NCA Trak		DOES NOT USE THIS RESOURCE
Primary Co-location		1 - Detective Trooper and CAC staff are the only members sharing a co-located site. Other MDT members remain located nearby in their respective worksites.
Team Space		Primarily serves children, but limited use for adult victim support; physical limitation of work site precludes easy expansion beyond current services
Case Reviews		Not currently structured; plans in place to reinstate reviews
Forensic Interview		Not on any scheduled basis; feel that lack of team cohesiveness impacts this process.
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		VSP, MPD, BCPD believed to have advanced interview training, but other law enforcement is unconfirmed; DCF has trained staff; prosecutors open to training options.
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Longterm status as Child Advocacy Center provides the stability for support of young victims</li> <li>•Close proximity of MDT partners facilitates working relationships in the absence of co-located facility</li> <li>•Appointment of new Executive Director provides potential for the rejuvenation of unit objectives</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Funding for local law enforcement participation in MDT</li> <li>•Limitation of physical workspace continues to limit ability to co-locate a complete MDT at CAC site</li> <li>•Division of DCF districts has a minor level of impact for coordination with Orange county cases</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Explore alternate funding for law enforcement to include involvement of county Sheriff's Department</li> <li>•Encourage continued commitment to MDT structure and staffing (to include adequate site workspace)</li> <li>•Complete NCAC reaccreditation process for CAC</li> </ul>		



MDT - Components	Windham	Comments
Police		1-VSP (not co-located); 1-part-time Windham Sheriff's Deputy (at CAC)
DCF		2 DCF districts (primarily Bratt office); not co-located
Prosecution		1- SIU dedicated prosecutor; not co-located, but located nearby
Medical		No pediatric S.A.N.E. available locally; supported through Dartmouth;
Mental Health		Not co-located but readily available throughout county
Victim Advocate		coordinated resources through SA office and CAC
CAC Accreditation		NCA Associate Membership
NCA Trak		NOT USED AT THIS TIME - NOT AVAILABLE
Primary Co-location		MDT partners using traditional workspace outside of SIU/CAC
Team Space		Interview space; Executive Director & part-time investigator only full time occupants
Case Reviews		Conducted every other month at SA's office
Forensic Interview		Developing process; scheduled for alternate months from reviews
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		LE/DCF receive basic and advanced interview training
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place

**Strengths:**

Close proximity of MDT partners who are not co-located at SIU/CAC  
 Executive Director fulfills dual role of victim advocate for initial contact support; SA victim advocate available upon filing of charges

Good networking among MDT partners in spite of disparate worksites

**Challenges:**

Lack of experienced investigators  
 Need to improve team cohesiveness in general  
 State agency districts represent "boxes" that are difficult to break out of

**Recommendations:**

Establish clear supervisory chain for investigation function  
 Continue to develop multi-disciplinary "team identity"  
 Continue CAC accreditation process

## State of Vermont SIU 2011-2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU/CAC:** *Windsor County Unit for Special Investigations (WNSI)*  
*The Family Place Child Advocacy Center*  
*Springfield Area Parent Child Ctr Child Advocacy Center*  
WNSI Director Julie Gaudette (802) 295-3882

**Geographic Area Covered:** Windsor County, VT

**Governance:** SIU Program Host Agent: The Family Place, Non-Profit 501C3  
SIU Policy/Advisory Board - an 18 Member Board of Directors  
Managed by a .5FTE Director.

**Brief History:** The Family Place Child Advocacy Center, established in 1999, accredited by the National Children's Alliance (NCA) in 2001, reaccredited in 2006, and up for its second reaccreditation in 2012, modified its CAC protocol in 2008 to become the SIU for Northern Windsor County. In 2009, after extensive community discussions and upon executing a countywide Memorandum of Understanding with its multi-disciplinary partners, The Family Place was approved by the Vermont SIU Grants Board to become the host agent for the Windsor County Unit for Special Investigations (WNSI). Because Windsor County falls into two Agency of Human Services (AHS) districts, Windsor County works with two Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) offices. The Family Place CAC continues to serve child sexual abuse victims and their families for the Hartford AHS district which includes northern Windsor county and 9 towns in southern Orange County. Central and southern Windsor County, including, but not limited to Windsor, Springfield, Ludlow, and Chester were previously underserved without access to a local Child Advocacy Center. Over the course of 2010, WNSI supported the development of an independent Child Advocacy Center at the Springfield Area Parent Child Center (SAPCC) in Springfield, VT. The CAC program at SAPCC was launched in September 2010. From June 2010 through September 2011, WNSI, its multi-disciplinary team and CACs at The Family Place and Springfield Area Parent Child Center have investigated and provided necessary services relating to 178 cases of abuse.

**Current Status:** WNSI is currently located at 5 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT, a floor above the Windsor County State's Attorney's Office. The unit has a co-located onsite staff of a dedicated full time prosecutor, a half time Victims Advocate through the State's Attorney's office, a part time SIU Director, and a full time SIU Coordinator who serves additionally as The Family Place CAC coordinator. VSP SIU has assigned two Detective Troopers to Windsor County who work those areas without local municipal police presence. These detectives work out of their respective Royalton and Rockingham barracks. One or more officers in seven of Windsor County's nine local police departments have been assigned and trained to respond to SIU cases. Two DCF investigators from each of the Hartford and Springfield district DCF offices are assigned to these cases. The Family Place CAC in Norwich has an on site part time therapist and SAPCC CAC has a relationship with Heath Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) for mental health care needs. The Springfield Area Parent Child Center has an on site part time CAC Coordinator. For victims 17 and younger, medical examination referrals are made to the Child Advocacy Protection Program at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC). For adult victims, all four of our major hospitals, Springfield, Mt. Ascutney, DHMC, and Gifford have a trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner staff rotation. Further, Windsor County is served by three victim advocacy groups from within the VT Network, including Springfield's New Beginnings for central and southern Windsor County and split coverage in the north between WISE of the Upper Valley and Safeline out of Chelsea. All of these positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, federal

and state grants. The WNSI Director and Coordinator are the only positions partially funded through a program support grant awarded to The Family Place by the Vermont SIU Grants Board. The WNSI Policy Board governance structure calls for a standing Grants/Fundraising committee. This committee is tasked with identifying opportunities, applying for and/or raising supplemental funds.

As mentioned above, from June 2010 through September 2011, Windsor County investigated 178 reports of child sexual abuse, serious child abuse and sexual offenses against adults. 160 of which were children and 18 adults. Additionally, each of Windsor County's CACs continue to serve families living in southern Orange and northern Windham counties.

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff and Facility).....	\$352,025.00 (*)
	Federal Grant (NCA/VCA).....	\$ 11,800.00 (**)
	State Grants (SIU, CCVS).....	\$126,120.00
	Other Funding (Granite United Way, Mascoma Foundation, Fundraising)	\$ 14,200.00
	<u>Municipal Contributions (In-Kind).....</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
	<b>Total Budget.....</b>	<b>\$504,145.00 (***)</b>

(\*) In-Kind contributions noted represent those reported in the FY2011-2012 SIU grant application and are attributed to the total compensation of a full time Deputy State's Attorney, a half time Victims Advocate in the State's Attorney's office, a full time VSP Detective Trooper, one DCF investigator (among shared staff in Hartford), a CAC Therapist working 1/5 time out of The Family Place and a full-time detective out of the Springfield Police Department. In-Kind contributions are assumed to be significantly larger when considering the actual number of staff participating from SAPCC, Springfield DCF, seven(+) local law enforcement investigators, advocates, medical and mental health staff who participate and support the unit, as well as facility use of CACs and office space for rotating board and partnership meeting venues.

(\*\*) Funding made possible through the National Children's Alliance and filtered through the Vermont Children's Alliance are included in the federal grant line item.

(\*\*\*) Funding total does not include the recent awards acquired by SAPCC in support of their CAC including 15K through CCVS as now recognized as a CAC by VT legislature, VCA chapter funding received through NCA and SAPCC fundraising efforts. SAPCC is an independent CAC. While SAPCC is supported by the efforts of the Windsor County SIU, the above budget reflects only those dollars granted to The Family Place.

**Future Needs:** 2011 has been another tremendous development year for Windsor County. WNSI's Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan that includes seven S.M.A.R.T objectives for the FY2011-2012 fiscal year. Those objectives include implementing both our newly developed best practice for adult cases and sex offender registry compliance, evaluating and proposing a plan to implement an independent forensic interviewer model, planning and funding dedicated countywide detectives, providing ongoing forensic interview and MDT training, increasing and sustaining current funding streams and applying for reaccreditation of The Family Place CAC and SAPCC CAC membership with the National Children's Alliance.

With the support and funding made possible through the Vermont SIU Grants Board, VCA and many of our basic and advanced training objectives have been met. However, training is still necessary for some of our smaller law enforcement forces, as well as DCF offices who have experienced turnover within their investigative teams. WNSI anticipates again hosting one of the region's Basic Forensic Interviewing



sessions in 2012 with funding made possible through the Vermont SIU Grants Board. Additionally, WNSI is working with WISE of the Upper Valley to host a December 2011 training for members of the WNSI MDT who work adult cases. This training is geared toward conducting the most comprehensive investigations that result in better prosecutorial outcomes. Funding for training programs is an ongoing need to maintain current skill sets and to further develop our MDT.

WNSI's MDT, while committed to the program, is very large. We have over 21 members that comprise the law enforcement and DCF disciplines alone. While the majority of our investigators have been trained in forensic interviewing, the interviews can lack consistency and continuity due to various styles and techniques inherent to each of our investigator's character traits. With a rather large amount of DCF turnover this past year, particularly in the Springfield district, training becomes quite costly. It's a double edged sword in that we want to ensure that investigators are trained to do the work, yet we lack any sense of security in the investment we make. While we understand this is an issue best addressed by the impacted agency, staff turnover greatly affects our ability to conduct effective investigations and causes frustration among the team.

Therefore, it is WNSI's goal to either become smaller from a law enforcement standpoint and work to identify and fund 3 to 4 individuals from within the county that will work all SIU related cases regardless of jurisdiction or move to an independent forensic interviewer model. Our future needs include identifying funding streams that would support either initiative. It is our recommendation that the state consider funding and implementing a four quadrant regional forensic interviewer model or devise a way that we can provide more funding to law enforcement agencies who wish to service more areas within the county. WNSI has not yet applied for a law enforcement grant to support a full-time dedicated detective. While our town managers are supportive of the idea, it has been difficult to gain approval based on bridging the financial gap of a partially funded full-time position that assumes a county wide post. When factoring in what these tenured, skilled detectives may already make as a total compensation package, plus a vehicle, equipment and other needs that may need to be absorbed by a municipal police department, including backfilling a position, the current financial incentives may not be adequate.

WNSI has made significant progress over the last year. We are implementing a response model for adult cases and recently piloted our sex offender registry compliance process. We maintain a "first time right" philosophy and strive to achieve it. For example, WNSI is currently developing an investigative checklist to ensure quality investigations lead to better outcomes for the prosecution and certainly, victims. In addition to our strategic plan and day to day work, if an issue arises, we address it and do our very best to provide our unit with the tools they need to be successful. Any reduction in funding would adversely impact our unit's case work, our establishing the protocols necessary to foster a unified, transparent, multi-disciplinary response to sexually based offenses and our support of prevention and awareness campaigns. WNSI's partnership agencies are committed and motivated. We have a proactive, aggressive momentum. In just this past year, WNSI's MDT has expanded its caseload to take on cases of serious child abuse, in addition to reports of child sexual abuse and sexual offenses against adults. In order to move forward in our goal to take on cases of elder abuse and domestic violence, our needs and capacity will also increase.

MDT - Components	Windsor	COMMENTS
Police		Departments conduct investigations according to existing jurisdictions (9 local departments; 2 VSP districts)
DCF		2 DCF districts; not co-located, represents a north/south county division
Prosecution		1 - SIU dedicated prosecutor; not co-located w/CAC, but adjacent to SIU office
Medical		S.A.N.E. (pediatric/adult) through hospital; available on case reviews
Mental Health		On site at CAC; referrals made as necessary
Victim Advocate		SIU dedicated VA from SA's office in White River Jct
CAC Accreditation		YES
NCA Trak		YES; biggest challenge is handling data submissions from many players
Primary Co-location		Interviews at CAC/ separate SIU office in White River/no LE/DCF co-location
Team Space		Use of traditional work spaces; SIU office available for meetings/interviews
Case Reviews		Conducted monthly at various locations; just beginning weekly info calls
Forensic Interview		In development; every other month schedule; practice of MDT debriefing conducted after each case closure
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		Identified need to improve availability and timeliness of SIU related training
501 c (3)		501 c (3) status in place
<p><b>Strengths:</b>  Well established CAC provides foundational service in child cases as well as adult cases  Well established and inclusive board of directors (including Dept of Corrections)  Ability to provide effective services despite the absence of solid MDT development</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  Inability to develop a consolidated and collaborative system of investigation as envisioned in MDT model  Multiple state agency districts spread over a large geographic area populated with numerous small/medium sized communities; everyone owns their part, nobody owns it all  Lack of funding is perceived as the major impediment to providing SIU dedicated investigators</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>  Address the multi-district divisions and resolve the "ownership" issue  Explore the option of utilizing a forensic interviewer as an option to address the ongoing multi-district dilemma  Develop a suitable funding/staffing arrangement to address local law enforcement concerns</p> <p><b>**Potentially, a pilot project opportunity that develops an alternative to the Vermont vision of MDT structure.</b></p>		

## State of Vermont SIU 2011 - 2012 Legislative Report

**Name of SIU:** *Addison County Unit for Special Investigations, Inc. (ACUSI)*  
**Formative status, not operational**

**Geographic Area Covered:** Addison County.

**Governance:** Vermont Non-Profit Corporation - Governed by a 7 Member Board of Directors/Bylaws.

**Brief History:** Addison County Unit for Special Investigations (ACUSI) was formally created in 2010 upon formulation and adoption of its by-laws and incorporation as a non-profit Vermont Corporation. This county was the last to start the process of creating a special investigation unit. In fiscal year 2011/2012 the County's State's Attorney applied for and received \$89,280.00 in SIU program support grant funds to hire a part time administrator/coordinator to work with the local community and entities to formally create the unit.

**Current Status:** ACUSI currently has no physical location. Due to the lack of permanently assigned full time investigators at this time, it is not felt to be prudent to expend funding on renting a facility until there is a definitive need to do so. The office of the Addison County State's Attorney located at 211 Maple Street, Unit 115, Middlebury VT, is used for mailing, and the conference room at the Middlebury Police Department is utilized for meetings. The unit has a dedicated part time prosecutor and a dedicated part time victim advocate. These positions are funded through a combination of in-kind contributions, federal and state grants. The three local organized police departments, Middlebury, Bristol, and Vergennes, as well as the Addison County Sheriff's Office have been unable, due to staffing constraints, to permanently assign investigative personnel to the unit. This has also been the case with the local office of the Department of Children and Families. The Vermont State Police just recently identified a Trooper who was interested in the full time investigative position, and after the screening process, have initiated training of this individual. The part-time administrator left the position during 2011 and little progress was achieved in development of the SIU

<b><u>Current Budget:</u></b>	In-Kind (Staff).....	\$143,999.98
	<u>State Grants (SIU).....</u>	<u>\$ 89,280.00</u>
	<b><i>Total Budget.....</i></b>	<b><i>\$217,519.98</i></b>

**Future Needs:** ACUSI remains in a formative state. Future options are being explored to build upon the preliminary steps that have already been accomplished. Funding awarded to the unit has not been expended with the exception of some incidental expenses incurred by the part-time administrator. A renewed effort is underway to focus on developing a functional SIU for Addison County.

MDT -Components	ACUSI - Addison	COMMENTS
Police		No investigative team; each department conducts independent investigations
DCF		2 -DCF investigators, not co-located; participate in case reviews
Prosecution		SA and Dep SA share SIU caseload
Medical		S.A.N.E. available most times at local hospital, but not 24/7, limited pediatric
Mental Health		Traditional referral relationship with county mental health agency
Victim Advocate		Only SA's victim advocate for child victims; contingent upon charging decision
CAC Accreditation		NO CAC IN COUNTY
NCA Trak		Unavailable
Primary Co-location		NO
Team Space		NO
Case Reviews		LE/DCF and SA conducted at SA office - monthly
Forensic Interview		NO
BFI/AFI/Reid/Other		Need standardized training protocol
501 c (3)		Not at this time
<p><b>Strengths:</b>  Community has a good level of networking in place with established professional relationships at all levels  Prosecutor has experience with SIU/MDT model from prior work history and has incorporated aspects of SIU model even without functioning unit in place  Willingness by partners to develop a model suitable for Addison County</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  Small size of partner agencies presents difficulty in contributing staffing to SIU/MDT with current funding model  Perception that this is not as high a priority for the county communities as other issues may be at present  Absence of CAC within the county</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>  Determine a leader for coordination efforts (time demands on current board members precludes extensive coordination)  Explore alternate staffing/funding models for investigator positions  Build core of MDT by focusing on investigative team, prosecution, and victim advocacy components</p>		

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Law Enforcement:** The preferred baseline staffing for SIU would include two law enforcement investigators per unit. Larger districts would require more, but as a minimum for each SIU, two per unit was a reasonable target. The vision for SIU/MDT composition in Vermont relies upon the Vermont State Police to provide one, SIU dedicated investigator, and the second investigator would be provided by municipal or county law enforcement agencies based upon a combination of in-kind contribution and state provided funding. Although this model does work to a certain degree in approximately half of the counties, it has not been as successful for the remaining counties. The barriers to success in this component can be attributed to funding concerns and to staffing shortfalls among law enforcement agencies.

The current funding model provides the availability of law enforcement grants of \$40,000 to support up to 50% of the expense for an investigator (limitation exists in current statutory language). In the sparsely populated counties of Essex and Grand Isle, a provision exists for access to a \$20,000 reimbursement grant as a means of providing for supplemental investigative resources through the Sheriff's office. A recurring concern among police chiefs and county sheriffs is the inability to provide a SIU dedicated position at the existing level of supplemental funding.

Staffing shortages (which occur in all departments at different times) and the overall small size of many municipal departments have been limiting factors in providing SIU investigators. Turnover within the ranks has also given rise to staffing shortfalls and problems with consistency in experience and training. Even with this challenge, 7 of 12 designated SIU have been able to initiate and sustain at least the baseline staffing for law enforcement. In 3 of the remaining 5 designated SIU, dedicated investigators are in place, but may not be co-located or fully staffed. Only 2 of the designated SIU rely on law enforcement investigators in a fashion described as "no change from traditional services".

### ***Recommendations:***

- **Continue to encourage and support Vermont State Police to staff a minimum of one unit-dedicated investigator per SIU**
- **Explore alternative funding/staffing solutions based upon individual county needs**
  - **Mutual aid agreements among towns to provide investigative services**
  - **Use of part-time staff by municipal/county agencies**
  - **Establish an increased stipend per SIU to offset local/county expenses**
- **Resolve/clarify the supervisory chain for SIU detectives**
- **Remain flexible in the application of MDT concepts based upon the geographic and population disparity among the counties**

**Department for Children and Families:** The vision for the SIU/MDT composition in Vermont seeks the placement of DCF investigators with other key members of the multi-disciplinary team in the respective county. The ideal is one (or two) DCF investigators located at the same worksite along with law enforcement investigators to provide a cohesive team of experienced investigators/interviewers. Only Chittenden county and Rutland county have been able to accomplish this goal. The remaining counties provide DCF investigators based upon district workload and case assignment protocols. Although this system provides the appropriate (and timely) child services component to the SIU/MDT, it still results in coordination challenges for case reviews and team cohesiveness.

Since 2008, DCF relies upon a centralized case intake process. In conjunction with improved risk analysis methodology, the result has been a significant increase in cases accepted by DCF for action. Not all of these are SIU cases, but the overall workload must be managed by the district offices. Even with increased numbers of case workers, DCF continues to be challenged with providing an SIU-dedicated investigator in the MDT model. Each DCF district is actively involved with each respective SIU, but in some instances this means that two or even three districts are providing investigation resources to a single SIU. DCF districts (as with VSP districts) do not necessarily align with county boundaries.

Staff turnover at some DCF districts has proven to be particularly challenging with respect to providing specialized training and with providing consistency in MDT participation. In addition to the boundary and staff turnover issues, some of the SIU worksites simply do not have adequate office space to accommodate additional staff positions. However, the feedback received during SIU site visits spoke to the general perception of the barriers as represented by DCF district boundaries and overall DCF workload management.

***Recommendations:***

- **Continue to explore options with DCF on providing a unit-dedicated investigator per each SIU**
- **Plan for SIU/CAC worksites that can accommodate the co-location of a DCF investigator (where applicable); this may involve developing an alternate location for individual SIU**
- **Research and evaluate the utility of a designated forensic interviewer model for those SIU with multiple DCF and police agency districts**
- **Remain flexible in the application of MDT concepts based upon the geographic and population disparity among the counties**

**State's Attorneys:** As an integral part of the MDT model, the prosecutors are a key component to the success of full case management. The prosecutors' role is not to be another active investigator, but to offer guidance to investigators as they pursue individual investigations and to prepare for successful prosecution of cases. Taking the facts as presented by the investigators, the prosecutor is responsible for court preparation and presentation, if required, for successful case prosecution. A primary goal in adopting the SIU/MDT model was to provide sufficiently thorough and complete investigations to prosecutors to minimize the need for expensive and emotionally difficult court trials.

Most SIU/CAC worksites are located with, or in close proximity to, the State's Attorney's office in each of the counties with an established SIU. Nearly every county has a prosecutor dedicated to handling SIU cases as a priority. The variance among the counties is most clear with respect to the size of the individual State's Attorney's office, but commitment to prioritizing SIU cases was noted in each office.

Gaining experience and receiving specialized training relative to SIU case prosecution were noted as consistent goals for this component. Vermont has a cadre of experienced prosecutors who are a valuable asset to mentor less experienced attorneys with respect to SIU case management. Interest in strengthening the network of subject matter experts in this discipline was noted at each site visit.

***Recommendations:***

- **Continue the active involvement in SIU/MDT functions**
- **Identify and share best practice models/information among prosecutors and SIU/MDT partners**
- **Develop training cycles specific to the needs of Vermont SIU prosecutors**
- **Develop and maintain an active system of networking among SIU prosecutors**

**Victim Advocates:** The ideal of the SIU/CAC/MDT model is to provide the resource of an advocate for victims at the earliest instance. This holds true for adult cases as well as in child cases. Not only is the early involvement important, but the consistency of the support is often a critical concern. All SIU rely on victim advocates assigned to the respective State's Attorney's office. In the larger State's Attorney's offices, an advocate is given the primary responsibility for serving SIU demands and may even be co-located with the SIU/CAC. In smaller offices, the services of the State's Attorney's victim advocate is not available until the point where charges are filed. This leaves a gap in service for victims as they await a decision on filing criminal charges. Adult and teenage victims of sexual assault may also have access to a confidential advocate through the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence who can provide various levels of support and services. The involvement of Network programs with their local SIU varies. Communication can also be challenging because of the crisis worker privilege under which Network programs operate.

Absent the involvement of a State's Attorney's Victim Advocate or a Network advocate, CAC staffers fill this gap at many of the SIU. As soon as a client enters, someone fulfills the role to assist with individual/family needs. Anecdotally, strong networking among the disciplines of child advocates, State's Attorney's Victim Advocates, and Network advocates results in a more seamless process of advocacy for adult and child victims of sexual assault. Some counties have struggled more than others, but the prevailing philosophy is one of doing the best possible to support victims regardless of discipline "turf" issues.

***Recommendations:***

- **Continue to advocate and support close networking among the disciplines of child advocates, State's Attorneys' Victim Advocates and Network advocates;**
- **Where possible, include a SIU-dedicated advocate from the State's Attorney's office at the same worksite with SIU/CAC staff;**
- **Support consistent structures for collaboration among the disciplines;**
- **Create policies, protocols, practices and an evaluation method that create best practices and consistent approaches for working adult victims;**



**Medical Services and Mental Health Services:** These two partners are intended to be fully involved components of multi-disciplinary teams. Due to the specialized nature of the work and the requirements of off-site demands, most SIU/MDT have close working relationships with these practitioners but do not necessarily share co-location of worksites. Some SIU/CAC sites have work space reserved for use by therapists, but it has been mostly a matter of connecting victims with service providers as the need arises. No units reported a lack of resource availability.

In the medical field, all SIU report ready access to sexual assault nurse examiners (S.A.N.E.) through local hospitals. Pediatric certified practitioners are not located at each hospital, but units reported that the availability of medical expertise for all victims was not problematic. In some instances, geographic distances are a problem but there were no reports of unmet needs.

MDT participation by medical partners and mental health partners was described as engaged and positive relationships were reported. A couple of units reported that contract renewals were leading to changes in providers, and a small number of units were still developing working relationships within their counties. In all instances, SIU report that these partners are important team members and that working relationships remain positive in light of the impractical nature of trying to co-locate these functions with the core MDT.

***Recommendations:***

- **Continue to develop close working relationships with both partners**
- **Maintain and improve the overall availability of S.A.N.E. practitioners (adult/pediatric) for regional hospitals**

**Records Management:** Nearly all of the existing SIU are affiliated with a Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) in the respective counties; most are co-located. In 10 of 12 designated SIU, CAC accreditation or affiliation with the National Children’s Alliance is in place. The National Children’s Alliance (NCA) provides guidelines for establishment, accreditation and conduct of a CAC, as well as providing a standardized records management and reporting system (NCATrak).

During the process of collecting statistical information for this report, it became apparent that the absence of a standardized record keeping system for SIU has created a significant problem in collecting reliable data. Most law enforcement agencies are on one records management system (the Spillman system through DPS), but this is not universal. This system provides data in a format that is useful for law enforcement purposes, but not necessarily relevant or useful for SIU specific information. Likewise, DCF has its records management system, prosecutors have their system, and the court has yet another records management system. Finally, all CAC affiliated with NCA have access to the use of another system (NCATrak) to account for their statistical information.

In reviewing data submitted on SIU statistical reports, it was found that many SIU were unable to capture information to complete the reports. In those instances where reports were completed, variation interpreting information to be input was sufficient to invalidate any analysis of the information. In short, it was not possible to draw conclusions from the statistical information being provided.

NCATrak is used by the CAC to report relevant statistical reports to NCA as required. The system is designed to collect and provide reports for *all partners* in the MDT. There are numerous pre-formatted management reports available as well as the ability to construct customized reports within the system. Use of this system would put all SIU on common footing with respect to data collected and reporting formats that would be available.

In addition, NCA officials have indicated that access to each NCATrak system (which is licensed by each CAC) is controlled by local administrators at the CAC level. This allows the local SIU/CAC to *designate appropriate partners* for access and contribution to the system. With relevant information provided by MDT partners, each SIU/CAC will be able to produce management reports which can then be compared and analyzed on a statewide basis; all using standardized formatting. NCA officials indicated that partnerships among CAC were possible to accommodate units that were developing but not in a position to be accredited or have independent access to NCATrak.

***Recommendations:***

- **Adopt NCATrak as the standard records management system for SIU statistical reporting**
- **Require use of NCATrak as a condition of grant awarding**
- **Provide financial support as needed to capture statistical data from all SIU**
  - **SIU currently receive 50% of the annual fee supporting this system**

**Training:** Training is one of the most noted segments among the SIU/MDT partners, especially for law enforcement and DCF investigators. The primary challenge is access to specialized training in a timely fashion to accommodate the cycle of investigator turnover. In many instances, specialized training is available only through out of state venues. This results in a dramatic increase in the expense for the training (air travel; lodging; meals, etc). To curb that expense, the Board has approved contracting with training providers to bring the training sessions to Vermont. This has been successful in providing valuable training with a notable reduction in price per student expense.

The drawback with this system is the length of time between course offerings and problems with coordinating basic course offerings with advanced course offerings; a log jam is experienced, with people waiting to get the appropriate level of training at the time it is needed. Many supported the idea of developing a method for delivery of this training with in-state resources.

With respect to prosecutors, many pertinent SIU/MDT courses are only available at the national level. Often, these courses are attended by a small number of prosecutors due to expense and scheduling issues. It was noted that Vermont does have a cadre of experienced SIU prosecutors who expressed interest in developing and delivering peer educational information. At the very least, interest was expressed to convene round table forums for SIU prosecutors to share best practice ideas and explore current trends in the discipline.

***Recommendations:***

- **Identify the core training requirements for MDT partners**
- **Develop the ability to provide basic and advanced level training in-state for MDT partners**
- **Develop regional/statewide forums for sharing of best practices and emerging trend information applicable to MDT partners (individual disciplines and teams as a whole)**
  - **Specialty training events, e.g., prosecutors, investigators, victim advocates**
  - **Joint trainings for MDT partners as a team**

## Conclusion

Based upon information gathered from site visits conducted around the state during November and December, along with individual meetings with leaders at the state, county, and local levels, it is clear that true progress has been achieved in the establishment of county based Special Investigation Units (SIU). Challenges still remain, but this review has identified a number of areas to focus upon to make necessary improvements.

The most significant item to note is the development of a vastly improved networking behavior among partners in the multi-disciplinary teams (MDT). Even in counties which have struggled to establish a fully functioning SIU/MDT, the communication among MDT partners is now occurring on a regular basis and service delivery is improved.

Core aspects of the MDT (police; DCF; victim advocates; prosecutors) should continue to seek the opportunity to achieve co-location status for the sake of team cohesiveness. Time and again, comments from site visits pointed out the critical nature of active participation and ready access among these partners. The remaining MDT partners (medical; mental health) are equally key members of active SIU/MDT structures, but the experience to this point is that it is not practical to demand co-location of these specialists when their ready availability and full participation adds significant value in their current format.

- ✓ Items of concern remain with respect to state agency districts which do not align with county lines.
- ✓ Management of turnover among investigators is an issue for both police and DCF.
- ✓ Funding issues for county and municipal investigators remains as a barrier in some areas.
- ✓ Sustainment and availability of specialized training for all MDT partners.
- ✓ Standardization of SIU records management should be addressed.
- ✓ Specific pilot projects may be available in counties which have been unable to adopt the existing MDT model
  - Forensic Interviewers in lieu of SIU assigned DCF staff
  - Mutual aid arrangements (funded) to be developed among police agencies in problematic locations
  - Use of qualified, less than full time, SIU investigators
  - CAC partnership arrangements for records management and mentorship functions

This report represents an assessment of the progress in developing county based Special Investigation Units in Vermont. Areas for improvement have been highlighted to assist with future development.

**APPENDIX – A**

**Vermont Special Investigation Units**

**FY2011-2012**

**Statistical Data Form**



**Vermont Special Investigation Units**  
**FY2011-2012**  
**Statistical Data Form**

**Reporting Period:**  
(check appropriate box)  
(by double left clicking)

**July – Sept (2011)**  
 **Oct. – Dec. (2011)**

**Jan. – Mar. (2012)**  
 **Apr. – June. (2012)**

\*Please note that all data requested should be calculated as accurately as possible. If our categories are different from yours, please choose the category that most closely matches. Please do not provide percentages.

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: **Vt.** Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared By/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Award Id Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statistical Overview of Case Activities during this Reporting Period**

**1.) Total number of new cases reported to SIU/CAC: \_\_\_\_\_**

A - Substantiated as Criminal Act: \_\_\_\_\_

- Closed by Criminal Charges: \_\_\_\_\_

- Remain Under Investigation: \_\_\_\_\_

B – Deemed as a Non Criminal Act: \_\_\_\_\_

C - False Report: \_\_\_\_\_

**2.) Prosecution, Disposition/Results**

A - Total # of Cases accepted for Prosecution: \_\_\_\_\_

B - Total # Cases Dismissed by Court: \_\_\_\_\_, by Prosecution: \_\_\_\_\_

C - Total # of Victims Deposed: \_\_\_\_\_

D - Total # of Convictions: \_\_\_\_\_ (**Attach Sentencing Information for each Case**)

- By Trial: \_\_\_\_\_

- By Plea Agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

E.) Total # of Acquittals: \_\_\_\_\_

**Case Information Minors (Under 18)**

**Total number of new children served at the SIU/CAC this reporting period: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Breakdown by gender and age*

Gender of Children

Female \_\_\_\_\_

Male \_\_\_\_\_

Age of children at first contact with center

0-6 Years: \_\_\_\_\_

7-12 Years: \_\_\_\_\_

13-17 Years: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of alleged offenders: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Breakdown by relationship and age*

Relationship of alleged offender to child

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's boy/girlfriend: \_\_\_\_\_

Stepparent: \_\_\_\_\_ Other known person: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Relative: \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Alleged Offenders:

Under 13: \_\_\_\_\_

13-17: \_\_\_\_\_

18+: \_\_\_\_\_

Unknown: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of abuse reported:

Sexual abuse: \_\_\_\_\_ Physical abuse: \_\_\_\_\_ Neglect: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness to Violence: \_\_\_\_\_ Drug Endangered: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Race or ethnicity of total children seen at the SIU/CAC during reporting period:

White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American: \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino: \_\_\_\_\_

American Indian/Alaska Native: \_\_\_\_\_ Asian/Pacific Islander: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children receiving services during reporting period:

Medical Exams/Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Counseling/Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral to Counseling/Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Onsite Forensic Interviewing: \_\_\_\_\_

Offsite Forensic Interviewing: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Protective Services Information:



Number of dispositions by category

Founded/ Reason to believe: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrative Closure: \_\_\_\_\_

Moved:

Unable to determine: \_\_\_\_\_

Unfounded/Ruled out: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Disposition:

Number of cases where charges were filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Prosecution Disposition/Results:

Number of cases accepted for Prosecution: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Convictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Pleas: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Acquittals: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Services Provided by SIU/CAC:

Refers to total number of services provided to individuals who were not seen at the SIU/CAC.

Services include:

Case Management/Coordination: \_\_\_\_\_

Prevention Services for Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: Describe activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Number provided service \_\_\_\_\_

**Case Information (Adults 18 and Over)**

**Total number of new Adults served at the SIU/CAC this reporting period:**

*Breakdown by gender and age*

Gender of Adult

Female \_\_\_\_\_

Male \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Adult at first contact with center

18 -21 Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Over 21 Years: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of alleged offenders:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Breakdown by relationship and age*

Relationship of alleged offender to Adult Victim:

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's boy/girlfriend: \_\_\_\_\_

Stepparent: \_\_\_\_\_ Other known person: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Relative: \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Alleged Offenders:

Under 13: \_\_\_\_\_

13-17: \_\_\_\_\_

18+: \_\_\_\_\_

Unknown: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of abuse reported:

Sexual abuse: \_\_\_\_\_ Physical abuse: \_\_\_\_\_ Neglect: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness to Violence: \_\_\_\_\_ Drug Endangered: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Race or ethnicity of total adults seen at the SIU/CAC during reporting period:

White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American: \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino: \_\_\_\_\_

American Indian/Alaska Native: \_\_\_\_\_ Asian/Pacific Islander: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of adults receiving services during reporting period:

Medical Exams/Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Counseling/Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral to Counseling/Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Onsite Forensic Interviewing: \_\_\_\_\_

Offsite Forensic Interviewing: \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Disposition:

Number of cases where charges were filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Prosecution Disposition/Results:

Number of cases accepted for Prosecution: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Convictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Pleas: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Acquittals: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Services Provided by SIU/CAC:

Refers to total number of services provided to individuals who were not seen at the SIU/CAC.

Services include:

Case Management/Coordination: \_\_\_\_\_

Prevention Services for Adults: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: Describe activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Number provided service \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX – B**

**SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNITS**

**SITE VISIT**

**CHECKLIST**

SIU/CAC by location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendees:

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❖ Multi-disciplinary Team:

- Police:
  -
- DCF:
  -
- Prosecution:
  -
- Medical:
  -
- Mental Health:
  -
- Victim Advocacy:
  -
- Child Advocacy Ctr:
  - Accreditation?
  - NCAtrak?

❖ Space Utilization:

- Co-located:
  - Yes?
  - No?
  - Workaround?
- Team working space:
  - Access by members
  - Access by public
  - Adult/Child/Both?
- Case reviews:
  - Location
  - Frequency
- Forensic Interviews:
  - Location
  - Analysis of interviews

Comments:

Training:

❖ Received:

❖ Needed:

Goals:

❖ Short-term:

❖ Long-term:

Challenges:

Suggestions:

Comments: