

EduNet Webinar Agenda

EduNet Webinar: Working with Teen Victims: Tips for the Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse Cases

On-demand Release Date: December 21, 2020

Welcome, Introductions, and Review of Agenda by Midwest Regional CAC
EduNet Webinar Presentation
Closing Remarks

Course Description:

Cases of child abuse involving a teenage victim presents its own unique challenges for prosecution. Understanding adolescent brain development is important for forensic interviewers as well as investigators and prosecutors. Preparing the case requires not only thorough investigation but thoughtful communication with a teen victim to obtain the facts of the crime and provide essential information about the prosecutor's role and judicial process. This approach will facilitate building a strong criminal case for prosecution.

Learning Objectives:

1. Key points for preparing a criminal case involving a teenage victim of child abuse and challenges to anticipate.
2. Understanding adolescent brain development and the teenage victim.
3. Overcoming common defense claims at trial.

Instructor Bio: Beth Merachnik, JD

Beth Merachnik serves as the Deputy Director of the Association of Prosecuting Attorney's (APA) Child Abuse Prosecution Project. She is the former Director of APA's Smart Prosecution Project. Ms. Merachnik is a former prosecutor from Massachusetts having served for over twenty years in both the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office and the Office of the Attorney General. Ms. Merachnik prosecuted a wide variety of cases during her career at the District Attorney's office, including crimes of homicide, sexual assault and child abuse. For over four years, Ms. Merachnik held the position Director of the Middlesex Domestic Violence in which she was responsible for implementing policy and program development, preparing training programs, facilitating community outreach and designing strategies for prosecution and victim safety.

Ms. Merachnik served at the Office of the Attorney General, first as the Chief of the Community-Based Justice Bureau. The bureau was dedicated to developing programs and policies, devising strategies, drafting legislation and providing training in the areas of family violence, child protection, juvenile justice and community safety. Following this, Ms. Merachnik served as Senior Counsel and Trial Attorney in the Criminal Bureau, prosecuting financial crime, public corruption and computer crime. Ms. Merachnik served on the Governor's Commission for Sexual and Domestic Violence where she was co-chair of the legislative sub-committee.



The Midwest Regional CAC is supported through grant funding from the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. *Please note there were no conflicts of interest noted on behalf of the moderator or presenter.

Continuing Education: Approved by Minnesota Board of Social Work for 1.5 hours of CEU through December 2021.

Course Coordinator:

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sara Lee, Program Manager at sara.lee1@childrensmn.org or by phone at 952-992-5277.



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