

BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



*Nomination for the Sandy Spring Bank Award
for
Innovative Programs
Maryland Association of Social Services Boards*

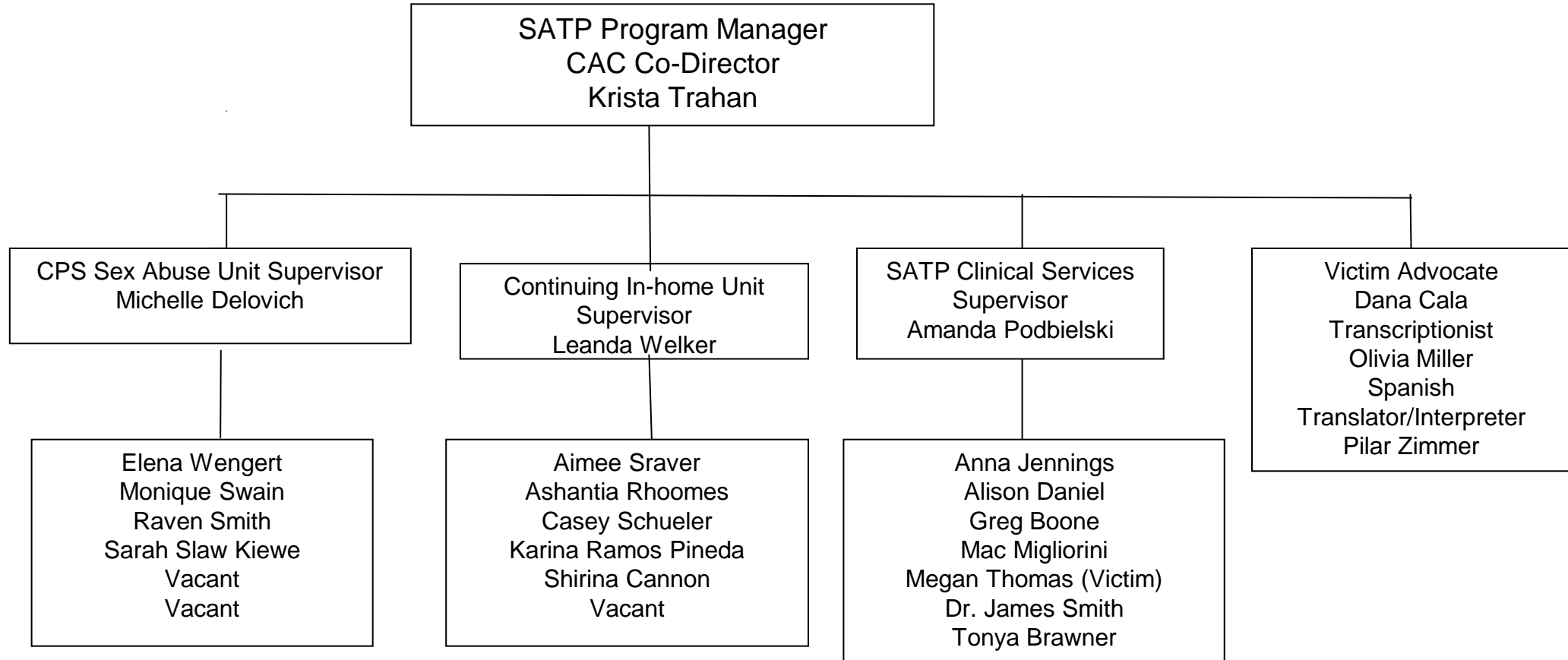
Sexual Abuse Treatment Program - Clinical Services

- **Our innovative therapeutic program offers a broad range of no cost therapeutic services to families in Baltimore County who have been impacted by sexual offenses.**
- **The program is comprised of six therapists:**
 - **Five specialize in treating problematic sexual behaviors**
 - **One is bilingual (Spanish)**
 - **One therapist primarily treats victims of sexual abuse**

Sexual Abuse Treatment Program - Clinical Services

- **There are currently 65 youth in our program:**
 - **16 victims of sexual abuse are currently receiving trauma therapy.**
 - **49 youth are receiving specialized treatment for problematic sexual behaviors.**
 - **33 of those youth are in treatment through a formal Diversion Agreement with the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office.**

Sexual Abuse Treatment Program (SATP)



Societal Impacts of Sexualized Behaviors

- A majority of the youth in our program have experienced complex trauma, which occurs when a youth experiences multiple traumatic events.
- It is our programmatic stance to treat the whole youth.
- This means providing all youth with access to trauma therapy regardless of the reason for their referral to the program.

Treatment Services

- **The program utilizes various evidence based and evidence supported therapeutic treatment models.**
 - **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Instinctual Trauma Response (ITR), Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT), Internal Family Systems (IFS), and Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT).**
- **These therapeutic models are delivered through individual therapy, family therapy, peer groups, and parent groups.**

Treatment Services Continued

- **Teletherapy is also offered to the youth in our program.**
- **The inclusion of teletherapy attempts to eliminate:**
 - **Transportation barriers for our clients**
 - **Address the ongoing challenges of service delivery during the COVID pandemic**

Treatment Services Continued

- **The specialized treatment arm of SATP-Clinical Services provides:**
 - **Psychosexual evaluations to assess risk and make treatment recommendations**
 - **Specialized treatment to youth ages 10-21 who reside in Baltimore County and who have demonstrated problematic sexual behaviors.**
- **With the inclusion of trauma therapy to all youth in our program, we have seen a reduction in the amount of time a youth is in treatment for problematic sexual behaviors, from 18+ months to an average of 12 months.**

Case Vignette

In 2019, a 13-year-old male entered into a formal Diversion Agreement after a child protective services investigation indicated he sexually abused his younger siblings. This youth was in foster care and had experienced complex trauma, which included substance abuse exposure, neglect, and witnessing significant sexual situations between his mother and her boyfriend.

In April of 2019, he participated in a psychosexual evaluation, and he began individual therapy and the younger peer group shortly thereafter. Due to his complex trauma, his tolerance in therapy was initially limited to short individual sessions and many struggles in peer group.

Case Vignette Continued

This youth processed his complex trauma with his therapist using the Instinctual Trauma Response Method (ITR). ITR uses graphic narratives and bi-lateral brain stimulation to process the roots of trauma, not just the symptoms.

Through time and intensive work with his therapist in our program, this youth was able to greatly increase his tolerance in individual sessions to 45 minutes and became a leader in his peer group.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, services had to be transitioned from in-person to telehealth. Despite this transition to a new format, this youth successfully completed treatment in July of 2020.

More Information about ITR

- Instinctual Trauma Response (<https://helpfortrauma.com>)
 - Treatment incorporates right-brain strengths, such as external dialogue, graphic narrative, art therapy, and representation. This method assists the right brain in communicating the traumatic event to the left side of the brain so that it can be holistically processed in sequence with a beginning, middle, and end, filed into memory, and be experienced as in the past and over.

More Information about EMDR

- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (<https://www.emdria.org/about-emdr-therapy/>)
 - During EMDR therapy the client will be asked to focus on a specific event. Attention will be given to a negative image, belief, emotion, and body feeling related to this event, and then to a positive belief that would indicate the issue was resolved.
 - While the client focuses on the upsetting event, the therapist will begin sets of side-to-side eye movements, sounds, or taps. The client will be guided to notice what comes to mind after each set. They may experience shifts in insight or changes in images, feelings, or beliefs regarding the event.
 - The client has full control to stop the therapist at any point if needed. The sets of eye movements, sounds, or taps are repeated until the event becomes less disturbing.

More Information about TF-CBT

- Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (<https://tfcbt.org/about/>)
 - TF-CBT is a structured, short-term treatment model that effectively improves a range of trauma-related outcomes in 8-25 sessions with the child/adolescent and caregiver. Although TF-CBT is highly effective at improving youth posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and diagnosis, a PTSD diagnosis is not required in order to receive this treatment. TF-CBT also effectively addresses many other trauma impacts, including affective (e.g., depressive, anxiety), cognitive and behavioral problems, as well as improving the participating parent's or caregiver's personal distress about the child's traumatic experience, effective parenting skills, and supportive interactions with the child.