



MARCH 2021



The Front Door to the Field

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

PROGRAM UPDATES & HIGHLIGHTS

CAST Community Welcomes New MS CAST Coordinator

Zero Abuse Project and our global CAST community would like to send a warm welcome to the new Mississippi CAST Coordinator, **Wendy Copeland**. Wendy joins the efforts to empower current MS CAST programs and grow new opportunities in-state through her position with the **Children's Advocacy Centers of Mississippi**. She comes to the team with many years of administrative and academic experience through her tenure with Mississippi College. Welcome to the team, Wendy, and thank you for all you do for children!

CAST in Mississippi Soaring to Great Heights

The Children's Advocacy Centers of Mississippi (CACM), along with researchers from the **University of Illinois**, are examining the impact CAST has made on student knowledge and competencies related to child maltreatment recognition and intervention through a two-year assessment project. **Karla Steckler Tye**, CACM Executive Director, provides us with a [preliminary update into the findings](#) for our #1 CAST state (28 programs currently) and how CAST is changing the landscape of undergraduate and graduate education in The Magnolia State.

New Technology Tested by CAST Students

The University of Illinois Springfield has partnered with **Creative Information Technology, Inc.** to beta-test app-based software to help modernize and improve child welfare investigations. CAST students, under the guidance of **Dr. Betsy Goulet**, will be involved in the preliminary research surrounding these apps. Thanks for all you do for the children of Illinois, and with the development of the apps, the world, Dr. Goulet! More information on the project can be found [here](#).

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Title IV-E Funding & CAST: An Empowering Combination

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire (UWEC)

Assistant Professor of Social Work, **Dr. Jamie Tester Morfoot**, shares with us the history of their program alongside their [strategy for using Title IV-E federal funding](#) to provide students with unique CAST learning experiences while providing financial support for their academic journey. We would like to thank Dr. Morfoot for taking the time to share her story and Title IV-E insight through her experiences in acquiring and utilizing this innovative funding source.

Friendly Reminder: CAST Profile Pages

At Zero Abuse Project, we want to continue to share information about your CAST program with the larger community. Information about your program also helps us with congressional meetings and can strengthen our strategic efforts to find federal and state-based funding for CAST and, more specifically, for both your CAST program and new ones yet to join the growing CAST family. The best way for us to highlight your program is through creating a **CAST Profile Page**. In under 10 minutes, you can customize and create your own unique marketing and page that succinctly captures your program at a glance. Prospective students, administrators, local/state/federal leaders, and others from within the CAST network can quickly access and explore what your program offers and reach out rapidly to explore resource sharing, funding collaborations, and research. Please click [here](#) to let us learn more about your CAST program!

Zero Abuse Project & University of Illinois Collaborate for CAST Research

Zero Abuse Project has joined forces with researchers from the **University of Illinois** to acquire funding through the **Institute of Education Sciences** for a landmark study on CAST efficacy across the nation. Several CAST schools submitted letters of intent to participate in the study and a proposal was submitted in late February. If fully funded, this would be the first study of its kind to assess CAST's impact across multi-state boundaries and will truly help us to understand the potential of CAST so as to ensure it is the premier curriculum for child maltreatment prevention and intervention. We at Zero Abuse Project would like to thank all the CAST and pre-CAST institutions who worked so diligently with us to make this proposal a compelling submission.

News? Updates? Collaborations? Contact Us!

If you have a news story to share, would like to write an article for our newsletter/website, or have ideas for funding collaboration and research, please contact the CAST Director at tyler@zeroabuseproject.org. The next newsletter will deploy in June and we'd love to share your stories and opportunities!

