A. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SETTING

First Step Resource Center is a nationally-accredited Children’s Advocacy Center that serves child victims of abuse, neglect, and drug endangerment, their non-offending caregivers, and adult victims of sexual assault. Sponsored by St. Patrick Hospital, First Step coordinates a multidisciplinary team (MDT) of members from Missoula City and County law enforcement, Child and Family Services, the Missoula County Attorney’s Office, community mental health providers, and victim advocate agencies.

B. DESCRIPTION OF CLIENT GROUP

First Step’s data reveals 2013 and 2014 were record years for patient volume, with 418 and 413 patients evaluated, respectively. 2012 represented the previous record of 390 evaluations. Since its founding in October 2000, First Step has responded to 4,092 reports of child and adult abuse and assault. Approximately 80% of patients served are evaluated for child abuse, and 20% of patients are seen for an adolescent or adult sexual assault evaluation.

First Step is the only comprehensive medical sexual assault treatment program in the service area, serving surrounding counties and reservations, including the Flathead Reservation, Missoula, Lake, Sanders, Ravalli, Mineral and Granite counties. First Step staff is made up of three nurse examiners/forensic interviewers, three on-call nurse examiners, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and a Care Coordinator.

C. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Learning opportunities abound based on the day-to-day exposure to sexual violence against children, adolescents and adults. These are the most underreported violent crimes. The small fraction of abuse and assaults that are reported to law enforcement make it difficult to determine prevalence; many surveys and research conclude that about one in five women will experience rape in their lifetime (NISVS, 2011). The rate of childhood sexual abuse is equally alarming, with one in five girls and one in twenty boys suffering victimization (Finkelhor, 2012). A student will participate in the response to sexual violent crimes from interacting with victims and their caregivers face-to-face to interacting with the MDT including case review and the advisory board for JUST Response whose mission it is to coordinate community response and hold offenders accountable in cases of relationship violence, sexual violence and child abuse.

D. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS
Primarily, the student will work side-by-side with the Care Coordinator of First Step who will be supervising. The student will be expected to arrange appropriate scheduling with supervisor to be present at First Step.

Expectations will include:

- Observe interaction with families and victims and actively helping develop a referral plan for a family
- Respond to phone calls and supporting caregivers over the phone will be expected when appropriate to student’s comfort and knowledge level.
- Gather intake information for scheduling evaluations and notification of evaluations to partner agencies will be a key part of learning about facilitation of community response.
- Attend case review, JUST Response meetings and Advisory Board meetings as fits into schedule. Make observations of group facilitation challenges and opportunities.
- Student may be invited to attend a staff trauma support group session addressing symptoms of secondary trauma of staff.
- Follow up phone conversations with families will be integrated into learning experience.
- Identify and actively support nursing staff to enhance quality of experience of child and family as well as interaction with MDT members.
- Assist in developing curriculum for anticipated non-offending parent support group.
- Assist in developing agenda for MDT member orientation.

Clerical tasks may include:

- Updating Family Advocacy Excel spreadsheet.
- Generating written materials to offer caregivers for psycho-education on sexual violence.
- Ensuring informational packets are prepared for families.
- Being familiar with our Children’s Advocacy Guidelines as well as treatment models for sexually abused children.
- Help in keeping literature and social media resources on hand to support families in exploring and communicating positive, healthy approaches to sexuality.