

## **Paula J. Ternes, Child Forensic Interview Specialist – Child/Family Advocacy Center – Bemidji, MN**

Paula Ternes currently serves as a Child Forensic Interview Specialist with the Child/Family Advocacy Center of Northern Minnesota, where she specializes in interviewing child sexual assault victims and assisting area law enforcement agencies with criminal investigations involving child victims. Prior to this, Paula served as a police officer/investigator with the Fargo, North Dakota Police Department for 24 years.

Paula's extensive experience in conducting criminal investigations and interviewing skills involving children led to her serve as the lead investigator for the Fargo Police Department's Crimes Against Children Investigative Unit from 2008 to 2014. In this capacity, Paula investigated hundreds of cases where children were victimized through sexual and physical abuse, internet luring, and child exploitation through the distribution of child pornography. She also served as the Fargo Police Department's liaison with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on the region's Human Trafficking Task Force.

Prior to her assignment as an investigator, Paula served as a uniformed patrol officer, school resource officer, and DARE instructor for the Fargo Police Department. She also served as an adjunct instructor at the Lake Region Law Enforcement Basic Training Academy in Devils Lake, ND where she provided instruction on the subjects of Criminal Sexual Assault Investigations, Domestic Violence Response, Police Report Writing, Digital Media Evidence Collection, and Child Abuse Investigations.

Paula is a 1990 graduate of North Dakota State University and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology with an emphasis in law enforcement.