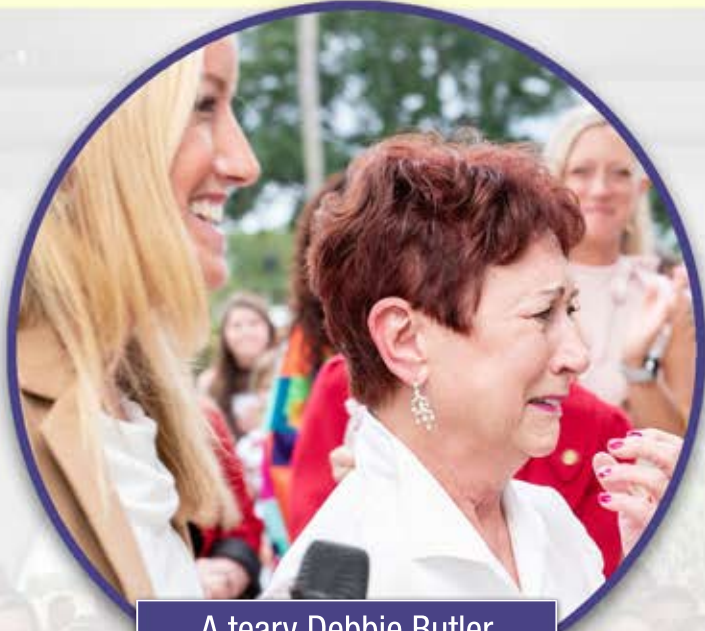


THE CIRCLE

SUMMER 2022

The Newsletter of the Children's Advocacy Center



A teary Debbie Butler surprised by CAC dedication

The Children's Advocacy Center kicked off their ribbon cutting ceremony without a hitch at the Grand Opening. The center was built to improve recovery outcomes for abused children in Circuit 19. Nearly two hundred, who supported the CAC from the start, were in attendance to celebrate the joyous evening. Supporters such as Dr. Madhu Sasidhar



WE DID IT!

President of Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital as well as Senator Gayle Harrell to name a few. Many had the opportunity to take personal tours throughout the facility while enjoying food and drink sponsored by Tutto Fresco and Bonner Bar. Sebastian Exchange Club and Blyco made donations towards the Advocacy Center. Debbie Butler, President of GFNF, who spearheaded the mission, was gifted with a plaque dedicated to her to reward her tireless effort to get the Children's Advocacy Center quickly operational. The center is expected to serve over 1,200 children yearly.





LETTER FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Caroline Vinyard

The Children's Advocacy Center of Circuit 19, or what I like to call our Circle of Care, strives to be the model for the state in terms of quality care and excellence in customer service when treating victims of abuse. Using state of the art technology we can provide experiential and innovative training opportunities for all disciplines co-located at our CAC. We are just getting started as far as how we plan to transform the child abuse system in our community.

One example of how we are leading in the way of innovation is the healing garden at the Children's Advocacy Center. The garden represents the ability to transcend the trauma our children and families have incurred through therapeutic horticulture programs. We also aim to serve additional vulnerable populations and children with special needs by partnering with other nonprofit organizations.

The newest member of the multidisciplinary team is Autumn, our facility dog. Autumn was trained at the Paws and Stripes Academy along with her handler and victim advocate, Wanda Eckhoff. Research shows that facility dogs aid in obtaining child abuse disclosures in a forensic interview given they offer emotional support and reduce stress.

Caroline Vinyard

Caroline Vinyard

DASHBOARD

Children served during pilot program



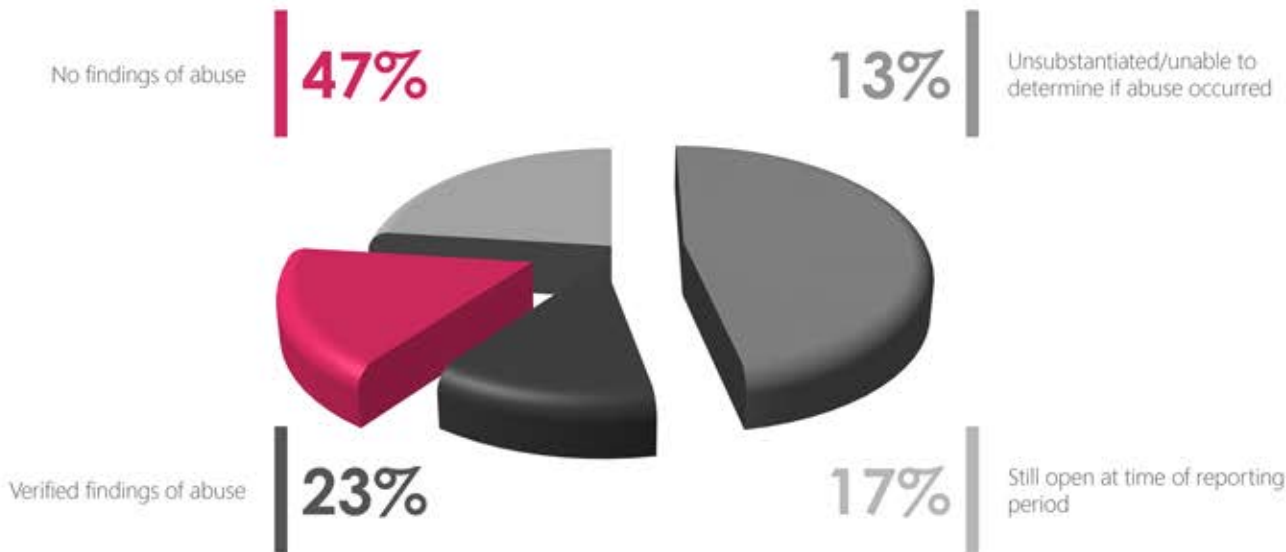
The Children's Advocacy Center of Circuit 19 launched a multidisciplinary response to child abuse investigations pilot program in February of 2022. The pilot served 40 children in total from Martin, Saint Lucie, and Okeechobee Counties. The CAC is fully operational as of July 1 serving all 4 counties, including Indian River County.



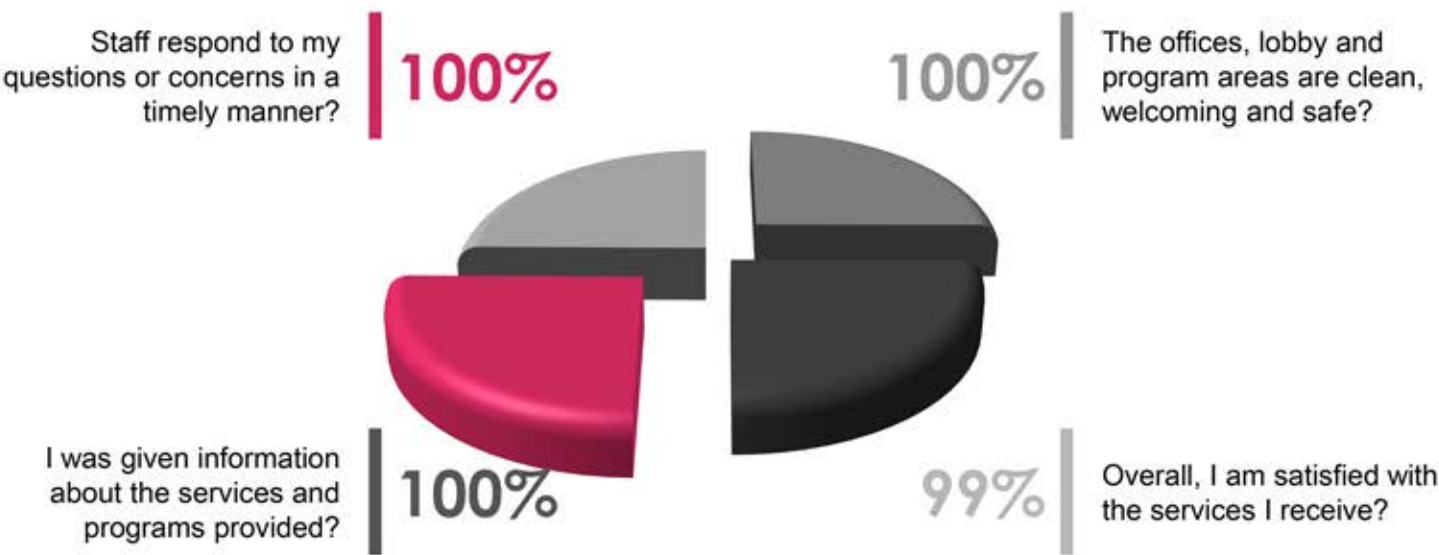
AGE OF CHILDREN AT FIRST CONTACT WITH CENTER



DISPOSITION OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE



SATISFACTION SURVEY



INNOVATING CHILD WELFARE



The Dream Team, including Debbie, Caroline, Stephanie and Christopher took a trip to visit Nova Southeastern University to go virtual. They were invited by Dr. Adam Williams to sit in a faculty presentation on emerging technology. In this meeting The Glimpse Group, who creates premiere virtual trainings across the country provided real demonstrations on how this new technology is being used in partnership with the University. Oculus is a company owned by the meta-verse that was purchased in 2015 and is a computer technology that creates simulator immersive environments and innovative digital tools such as 3-D learning. Oculus is leading the way in a new reality for the world. The Children's Advocacy Center is partnering with Nova to explore opportunities in forensic interview training, child protective investigative training and virtual therapy. Stephanie Castellanos and Christopher

Murray didn't pass up a chance to try on a headset and go virtual. Christopher admits it takes getting used to but is an experience like no other. This is the future, he says. The benefit of VR is greater real in depth environment simulations, an active experience rather than a passive experience, interactive and engaging content, increased knowledge area, limited distractions, and engaged environments reflecting actual scenarios or dangerous conditions without the risk of fatal errors. The CAC wants to be the best CAC and feel they can lead the way through innovation.



THE GLIMPSE GROUP



A GARDEN OF HEALING



Jay Bloom & Karla Bloom from Native Bloom Inc. are working with the CAC to create a children's healing garden which will be a 17,000 square foot area built to bring healing for the children who visit. "The blueprint and rendering exceeded our expectations", said Debbie after meeting with them to discuss. The garden will be a tremendous opportunity for corporate sponsorship including personal bricks to be engraved for donors. Karla who designed the garden intended for it to reduce stress, depression, and encourage exercise and



positive social interaction and promote a sense of well-being and peace. Some of the key features to the garden will include a large paver heart, boulder fountain, tiny town, sensory garden, quiet spaces with shaded areas, a putting green for children and adults, small water fountains and a fairy hill. This is the kind of project you dream of, said Karla, and the kind that will have a positive impact on the children and families entering the facility. They are starting to raise funds and looking to break ground some time in October of 2022.





Team Member

WELCOME THE NEWEST MEMBER TO THE FAMILY "Autumn"

Autumn is the Children's Advocacy Center's facility dog. She is a Siberian Husky from Brevard county. She went through the Paws and Stripes program as a rescue in an intense twelve week course then trained alongside her handler, the CAC victim's advocate Wanda Eckhoff. "The staff there train the dogs initially and then we met our dog and spent the week practicing skills such as trips to various public places, sitting through a lunch at a restaurant, a child interview etc. She is gentle and kind and loves to give kisses and snuggle", says Wanda. Her favorite treat is ice cream and she also loves to "talk". She loves kids because they are at her level. Research shows that facility dogs aid in obtaining child abuse disclosures in a forensic interview given they offer emotional

support and reduce stress. Children who are victims of abuse and must tell their stories may find the process easier with a therapy dog. Providing comfort is at the heart of what therapy dogs do in a variety of places where they are called to action. Today they are a welcome part of the healing process.



Stay Tuned:



July 18th-20th

The Children's Advocacy Center will be attending the 2022 Florida Krimes Against Kids Conference at the Coronado Springs Resort, Disney.



TREASURE COAST CHILD SUMMIT

September 21st -22nd

The Annual Treasure Coast Child Summit will be held in concert with the Sexual Assault Response Team Symposium at the IRSC Training Complex. Betsy Goulet, Originator of the CAC model, named as the annual Child Summit Keynote Speaker.

We want to thank all our sponsors and supporters who made this happen. If you would like to continue supporting the CAC please visit us at: www.gfnf4kids.org

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