

THE CIRCLE

SPRING 2023

The Newsletter of the Children's Advocacy Center

FRESH START TO THE YEAR: SELF CARE RETREAT

The Children's Advocacy Center started the year off by escaping the modern stresses of life and a Monday morning by engaging in a self-care retreat. Our CEO Caroline Vinyard in partnership with Harmony Hopes Stables, treated the multidisciplinary team (MDT) to a holistic approach to relaxation. MDT members received self-care healing through Sound Vibration Therapy, music, nature, equine psychoeducation, and goat walking. MDT members in attendance included: Law enforcement from Martin County Sheriff's Office Special Victims Unit and the Indian River County Sheriff's office, Victims' advocates from the Sexual Assault Assistance Program, Child Protective Investigators from the Children's Advocacy Center Unit and Children's Advocacy Staff. Self-care for professionals is vital to the effectiveness of the services provided to abuse victims. Helping professionals often don't consider their own needs or are preoccupied with their responsibilities. Helpers mistakenly believe they are invulnerable to fatigue, stress, frustration, and depression. Often, they see the needs of others and feel the responsibility to lift them, and in the process, they forget about self-care. As helping professionals, we have learned that helpers also need help, encouragement, and support. Being successful in the human services field requires a



strong, committed individual. It is essential to respond to multiple needs, often in a crisis for the individual or family. Every youth/family is different, and providing a nurturing response requires a level-headed and capable professional. The CAC will offer self-care and team building activities at least 1x per month.





LETTER FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Caroline Vinyard

Happy New Year!

2023 offers us a fresh start and instills hope for our future. We shall be renewed and restored at the first annual self-care retreat for the Multidisciplinary Team scheduled for January 9th. This event is in partnership with Harmony Hope Stables, a local nonprofit specializing in equine therapy.

Our vision is to be innovative leaders changing the landscape in the field of child abuse and neglect prevention. Our passion, patience, persistence, and perseverance are the four Ps of innovation. All partner agencies are encouraged to bring their ideas and creativity to the table, cultivating collaboration. We plan to roll out our virtual reality training application this month and will solicit feedback from the team.

In line with our strategic plan, Guardians for New Futures established a mental health program to provide services to underserved populations. We also continue to develop our child abuse prevention program to serve all four counties contingent on funding sources.

Blessings,

Caroline Vinyard

Caroline Vinyard, MBA, LMHC
Chief Executive Officer

Performance Spotlight

Reporting Period: July 1st - Dec 31st

Data contains preliminary baseline numbers completed by the CAC

Total number of children served at the CAC during the reporting period:

347

Gender of children:

Male **137**
Female **210**



Age of children at first contact with center:

0-6 years **129**
7-12 years **96**
13-18 years **122**

Types of abuse reported:

Sexual Abuse **148**
Physical Abuse **115**
Neglect **94**
Witness to Violence **3**
Drug Endangerment **14**

Relationship of alleged offender to child:

Parent **189**
Stepparent **15**
Other Relative **49**
Parent's boyfriend/girlfriend **24**
Other known person **17**
Unknown **60**

Age of alleged offenders:

Under 13 **5**
Age 13 to 17 **7**
Age 18+ **292**
Unknown **50**

Total number of alleged offenders:

354



Cases accepted for prosecution:

9 out of 122



Onsite forensic interviewing:

287



Law Enforcement Disposition-Number of cases where charges were filed:

27 out of 122



Disclosure rate: 70%



Referrals to onsite therapy provider:

81



Training Facilitated by CAC:



Medical Exam/Treatment:

184

- CPR Training to: **2** agencies **21** staff
- Initial Contact and Minimal Facts Interview to the Police Academy Crossover Class
- State Attorney Presented a training to all **14** LE agencies on overview CAC/CPT model



Transportation services:

46

CHILD PROTECTION TEAM



The Child Protection Team under the umbrella of Children's Home Society is a partner agency housed at the Children's Advocacy Center. When children have experienced abuse or neglect, the Child Protection Team helps them through the journey toward healing.

The Child Protection Team serves the entire family. While the focus is on the child's health, safety and emotional well-being, they also understand that the healing process involves the whole family. The team is sensitive to children's physical and emotional pain and works closely with local officials to help ensure children's safety and to connect them with appropriate services as they work through their trauma.

The Child Protection Team provides services and support for children who have experience abuse or neglect, including:



Kenyel Day

- Medical diagnosis and evaluation
- Child and family psychosocial assessments
- Psychological evaluations
- Specialized and forensic interviews
- Expert court testimony

Meet the Team

Kenyel Day- Program Director
Ashley Schutt- Program Supervisor
Jibril Mohammed- Case Coordinator
Julianna Grillo - Case Coordinator
Shannon McKay- Case Coordinator
Marcella Johnson- Nurse Practitioner
Carly Jones- Nurse Practitioner
Dr. Walters - Medical Director





BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE (BACA)

Ryder and Princess of Bikers Against Child Abuse visited the Children's Advocacy Center to learn more about the CAC and how we might partner for the benefit of children. BACA is an international organization founded by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and faculty member at Brigham Young University. Their mission is to create a safer environment for children while empowering children to not feel afraid. BACA works in conjunction with local and state officials already in place to protect children. They provide support based on each child's individual needs. Some services may include physical presence when needed and funding to aid in children's therapy and more. For more information visit www.BACAWORLD.ORG

CAC Services



Mental Health

We offer trauma-informed, evidence-based mental health care as a specialized clinical process designed to assess and mitigate the long-term adverse impacts of trauma or other diagnosable mental health conditions. Our licensed mental health counselors provide individual and family therapy to both children and adults via telehealth and office visits.



Prevention

Our Prevention Education Program is currently being proposed in all four counties within Circuit 19. Our program aims to educate and empower children and adults with information and strategies to prevent, recognize, and respond appropriately to child abuse, digital dangers, and trafficking using evidence-based curricula in after-school programs and youth-serving organizations.



Supervised Visitation & Monitored Child Exchange

The CAC offers supervised visitation and monitored child exchange as requested by the family court system. Our visitation goals are to support healthy communication between parents and children.



Advocacy Case Management

Our CAC coordinator provides advocacy case management services to children and their nonoffending caregivers presenting at the CAC. This direct service provision includes interpretation services, crisis counseling, needs assessment, transportation, emergency supplies, and multidisciplinary team staffing.

Stay Tuned:

CHILDREN'S HEALING GARDEN UPDATE:

Raised So Far: **\$60,500**

Needed to Reach Goal: **\$189,000**

Ground Breaking: **April 15th, 2023**



SPONSORS:

\$10,000 Plus

Sebastian Exchange Club

Stephen Yuenger

Nana Macaulay Bergman Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Busch Family Foundation

Blyco Electric

Plym Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Dyer Difference Award

Special K Foundation – Naomi Kennedy



CHAMPIONS OF CHILDREN

Healing Garden Ground Breaking Event

BBQ

APRIL 15TH 2023
SATURDAY @6PM

SUPPORTING CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

Remnant
CONSTRUCTION



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, JULY 22nd, 2023

ST. LUCIE TRAIL GOLF CLUB

951 SW Country Club Dr. Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

SHOTGUN STARTS @ 9:00^{AM} \$125
Entry Fee

TREASURE COAST **CHILD**
SUMMIT

SAVE THE DATE

September 27th & 28th
IRSC Safety Training Complex