

The History

- 1989: Illinois passed the Children's Advocacy Center Act (PA 86-276).
- Each county shall establish a multidisciplinary child advocacy advisory board (CAAB) and that each shall develop a written protocol for the investigation of child sexual abuse.
- 1997: Act amended to include severe physical abuse.
- Recommended that each county develop a Child Advocacy Center.
- 1999: The Child Advocacy Center of McHenry County established in Woodstock, IL.

The Reason

- Child Sexual abuse is a crime of secrecy. There are usually no witnesses, no "weapons", and no visible injury to the child. In the past, children who were brave enough to tell of their abuse were burdened with repeated interviews by adults and various professionals.
- Interviews often took place in less than desirable locations such as Police Depts., school offices, or in the home where abuse took place.
- The stress to the child was often compounded by internal belief systems that the abuse was their fault or that nobody would believe their story.

The Service

- Forensic Interviews conducted by trained professionals, utilizing videotaping equipment.
- Advocacy Services provided to the victim and their non-offending caretakers, including medical and counseling referrals.
- Case Management services maintain case coordination and support services.
- Case Reviews conducted by the multidisciplinary team (MDT) on a regular basis to assure information is shared and cases are handled expeditiously.
- Community Education is provided on topics of child abuse and child advocacy center services.
- Professional Training opportunities are provided to MDT members to assure the most current information and techniques are available.

Child Advocacy Center Of McHenry County, Inc.



How it Works

- A report of child abuse is received.
- The CAC coordinates a time when professionals from Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services (DCFS), Prosecution, and Treatment Services come together at the CAC.
- The alleged child victim(s) are brought to the "child friendly" center to be interviewed by a trained forensic interviewer.
- The rest of the "team" observes the interview on closed circuit TV.
- The interview is videotaped, providing a permanent history of any disclosure.
- The approach significantly reduces the need for multiple interviews.
- Team members work together on the case ensuring a coordinated effort.
- Support & advocacy services are provided to the victim & non-offending family members.

The Mission

- To minimize the stress for the child and family by the investigatory and judicial process
- To ensure effective treatment for the child and his/her family.
- To ensure coordination and cooperation in all agencies involved in child sexual and severe physical abuse cases.
- Our goals are to reduce the secondary trauma associated with the disclosure of severe physical or sexual abuse, to provide a friendly environment for interviews, and to utilize a multidisciplinary approach in conducting the investigation, prosecution, & treatment of child abuse.

The Team

- McHenry County State's Attorney
- IL Department of Children and Family Services
- McHenry County Sheriff's Department
- IL State Police Department
- Algonquin Police Department
- Barrington Police Department
- Bull Valley Police Department
- Cary Police Department
- Crystal Lake Police Department
- Fox Lake Police Department
- Fox River Grove Police Department
- Harvard Police Department
- Hebron Police Department
- Huntley Police Department
- Holiday Hills Police Department
- Island Lake Police Department
- Johnsburg Police Department
- Lakemoor Police Department
- Lake in the Hills Police Department
- Marengo Police Department
- McCullom Police Department
- McHenry Police Department
- McHenry County Conservation Police Department
- Oakwood Hills Police Department
- Port Barrington Police Department
- Prairie Grove Police Department
- Richmond Police Department
- Spring Grove Police Department
- Union Police Department
- Wonder Lake Police Department
- Woodstock Police Department

Partnerships in Action

You Can Help

The Child Advocacy Center is a charitable, not-for-profit organization funded solely by grants and private donations.

Please join us

The Center is in need of supplies, as well as financial assistance in order to continue developing these essential services.

If you would like to make a contribution to the Center, please contact us or mail your donation to the following address:

Child Advocacy Center of McHenry County
1780 S. Eastwood Drive
Woodstock, IL 60098
(815) 334-9597

Email: information@mchenrycac.org

Website: www.mchenrycac.org

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