



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY
CENTER



Established 2000

Annual Report
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018



To report suspected child abuse in Illinois call:

1-800-25-ABUSE

1-800-252-2873

Or 911 if an emergency



NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
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MEMBER

Dear Friends, Community Members, Donors.

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center, serving Champaign and Ford counties, opened its doors 19 years ago. We are a voice for victims of child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse. We are here to protect the victims, support the caregivers and educate against child abuse.

It is our goal to provide comprehensive services from our dedicated professionals in a child-friendly, child-centered atmosphere. We collaborate with the legal system through a coordinated team approach to investigations of child abuse. We assist caregivers to better understand each step of the process. The Children's Advocacy Center is designed as a safe and welcoming place for children to be heard; while ensuring that children are not further victimized by the system intended to protect them. We strive to make this difficult time as comfortable as possible for those involved so that healing can begin.

In the past year, we conducted forensic interview with 268 children and ongoing case management services to these children and their families.

Our family advocate connects our victims and non-offending caregivers to resources such as medical exams and treatment, counseling and crime victim compensation so families can access the tools they need to begin the recovery process.

The Children's Advocacy Center is funded by grants and donations. Thanks to our community for their continued support so that we can continue to seek justice for child victims of abuse. This can happen to anyone's child and we must work together to protect the most precious members of our community. If you suspect it, report it and let the professionals investigate it. If a child tells you they have been abused, believe them. The rate at which children make up stories of abuse is less than 5%.

Sincerely,

Kari May, Executive Director

**Start by
Believing** 

<https://www.startbybelieving.org/>



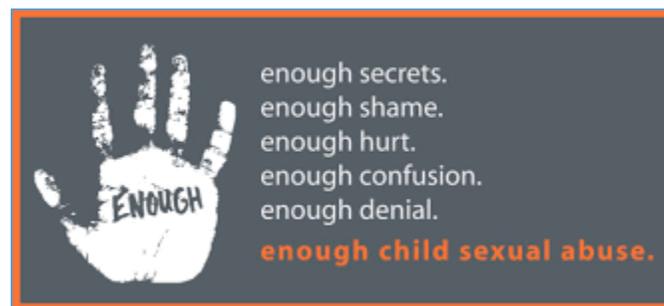
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What Are Children's Advocacy Centers?

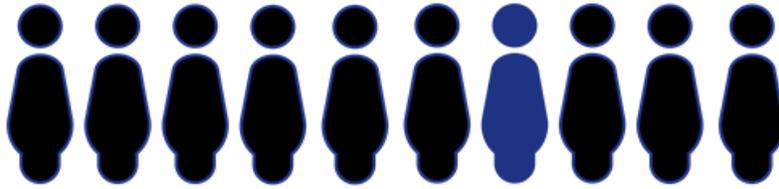
The development of Children's Advocacy Centers in Illinois began in DuPage County in 1987 under the leadership of the State's Attorney Jim Ryan. In 1989, specific requirements for the establishment and operation of Children's Advocacy Centers in Illinois were formalized by the passage of the Child Advocacy Center Act.

Children's Advocacy Centers are child-focused facility-based programs in which representatives from responsible agencies meet to discuss and make decisions about the investigation, treatment and prosecution of child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse cases. This multidisciplinary approach brings together under an umbrella all the professionals and agencies needed to offer comprehensive services: law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, victim advocacy agencies and the mental health and medical communities.

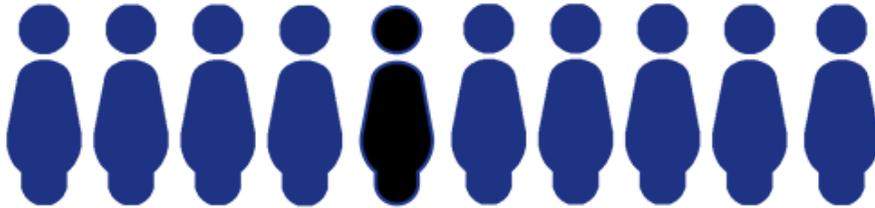


Child Abuse Prevalence

In America, over 3.6 million cases of child abuse are reported annually. That is a report every 10 seconds. What follows is one of the most difficult things a child and their family can go through. It is exceptionally important to make sure that the process of interviewing the child and moving forward legally is done properly and in a way that doesn't hurt the child further. It is equally important to help the child and their family heal from the trauma that they've endured. In Fiscal Year 2018 the Urbana, IL Department of Child & Family Services office investigated 1,597 cases of abused and neglect.

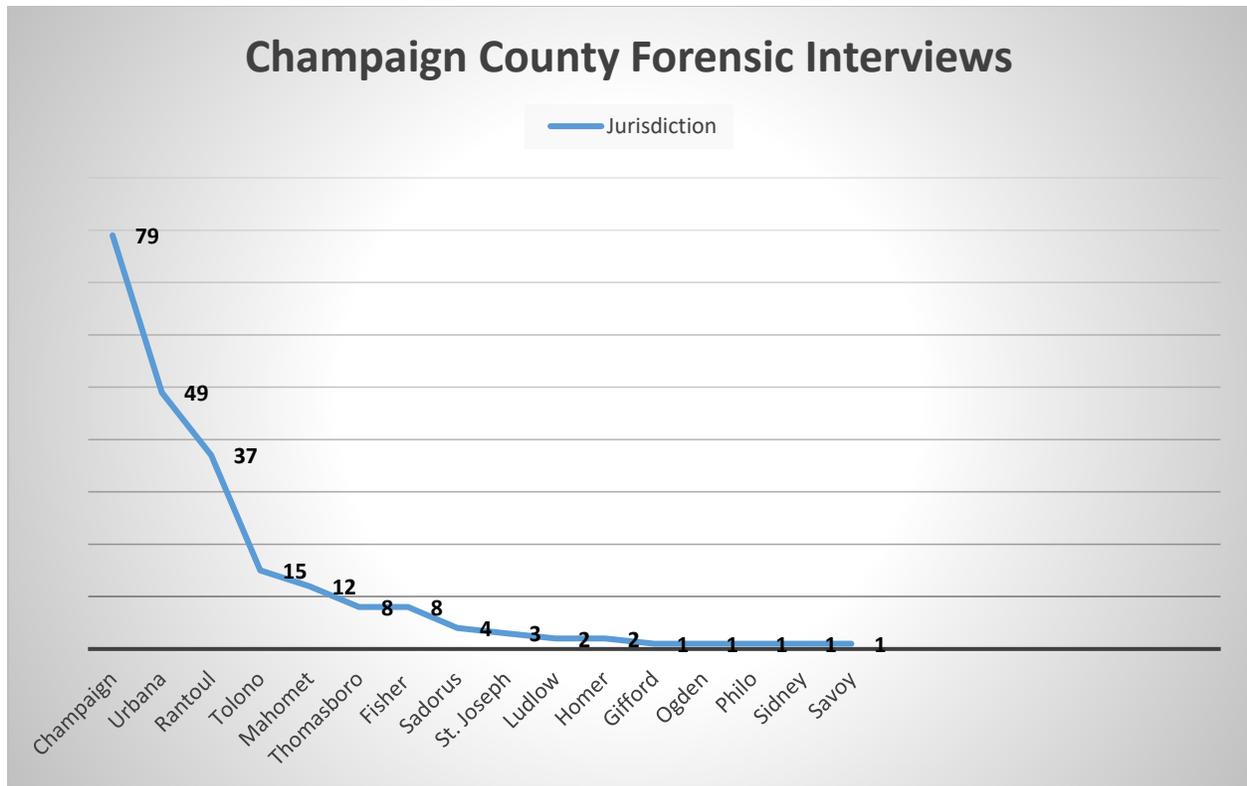


1 out of 10 boys are abused by the time they reach 18 years old

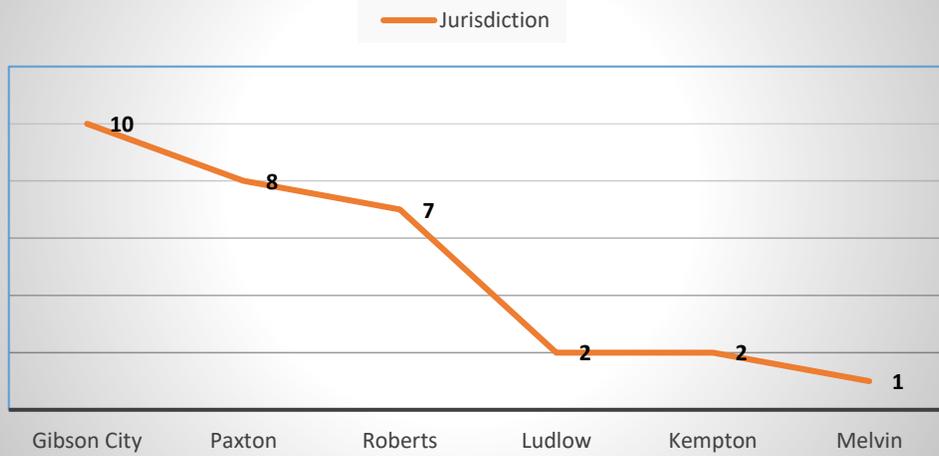


9 out of 10 abused children are hurt by someone they know

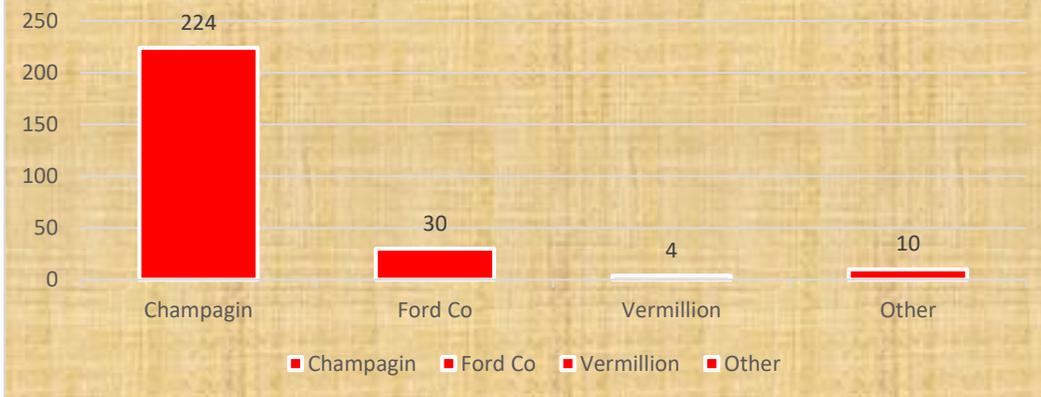
Breakdown of Children Served by the CAC



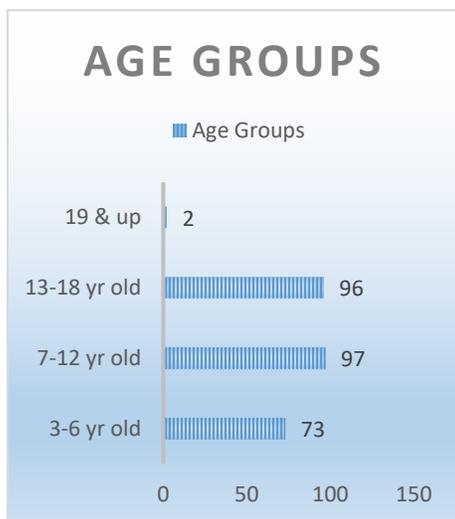
Ford County Forensic Interviews



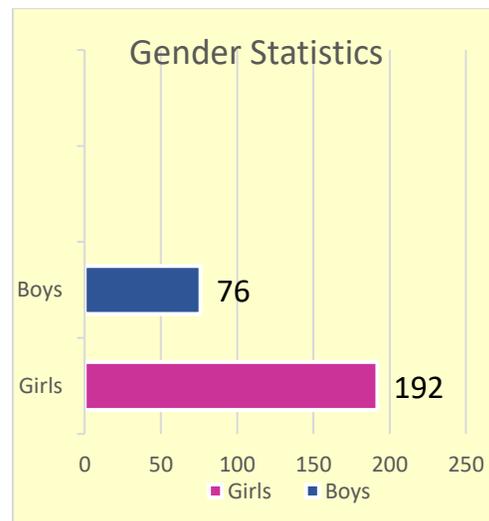
Forensic Interviews Per County

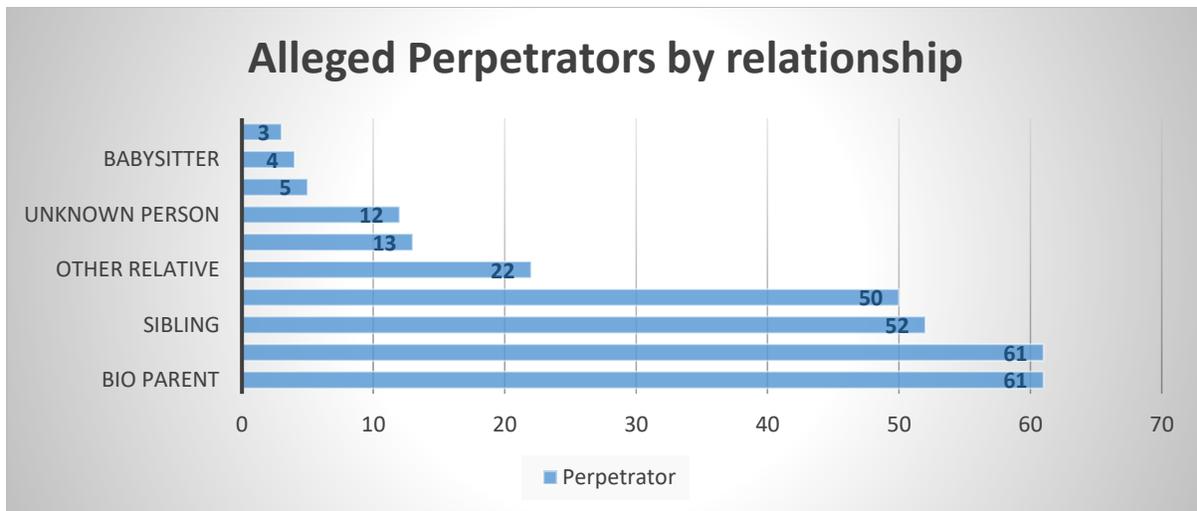


Ages of Children Served



Gender Breakdown





How We Benefit the Community

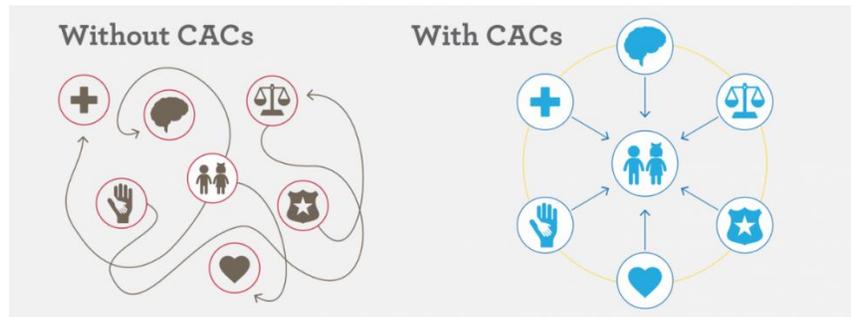
More immediate follow up to child abuse reports. By coordinating services for the child from the moment a case opens, the center ensures immediate follow-up on reports of abuse as well as ongoing collaboration between involved agencies.

More efficient medical and mental health referrals. Open communication and case coordination facilitates the timeliness with which the child and family receive needed services. Children receive prompt and ongoing services that are tailored to their specific needs and family situations. Interagency agreements between the Center and other social service agencies assure that children receive prompt medical care and counseling.

Reduction in the number of child victim interviews. The multidisciplinary team coordinates the interview of the child and non-offending family members at the Center. By coordinating the interview, the child is not subjected to multiple interviews by multiple agencies involved in handling the case.

Increased successful prosecution. More offenders are held accountable through improved prosecution of child abuse cases. By coordinating the process of how information is collected and disseminated, child advocacy centers improve the quality of information provided to prosecutors and juvenile court attorneys. Experienced professionals who have been specially trained to interview children thoroughly investigate allegations of abuse. The child-focused approach produces a greater quantity of reliable information used in criminal, civil and juvenile court proceedings.

Consistent support for child victims and supportive adults. More non-offending family members are empowered to protect and support their children throughout the process and beyond. The CAC will ensure the family is connected to the appropriate resources and services based upon the specific needs of the family.



Child Abuse is a National Epidemic

In FY2018, the Champaign County Children’s Advocacy Center facilitated over 260 interviews. Considering that child abuse is one of the most underreported crimes, an even greater number of children are victims of this horrific injustice. Everyone can contribute in some way to wiping out this horrible epidemic and helping victims of child abuse heal.

Child Abuse is a Community Problem

In 2018, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services received over 150 reports of children being sexually abused in Champaign County. Considering that child sexual abuse is one of the most underreported crimes, an even greater number of children are victims of this horrific injustice. As part of a community that actively promotes the well-being of every child, your involvement will directly reduce the number of crimes committed against our children.

How Can You Make a Difference?

There are many ways you can support the important work that happens at the CAC. The growth and continuation of the services provided by the Children’s Advocacy Center depends upon the public’s understanding of its mission. Community support and education is crucial to the prevention of child abuse. By working together, we can significantly reduce the number of child abuse cases within our community. We live in a time where violence permeates our society. To make a substantial impact on child abuse and the negative toll it takes on our community, we have to make changes within our communities and our society as a whole. Our society encourages calls to animal protection when our neighbor abuses his or her pet; however,

we are told it is none of our business when that neighbor abuses a child. It is you—the neighbor, friend, teacher or family member—who may see, hear, or even witness child abuse.

- *If you suspect that abuse is happening, report it. Call 800-25-ABUSE and/or your local law enforcement agency*
- *If there is a victim of abuse in your life, be supportive of them, tell them you believe them*
- *Donate to the Children's Advocacy Center by contacting 217-384-1266*

Offenders and The Steps They Take to Access Children

People who abuse children come from all economic and ethnic groups and a variety of social and educational backgrounds.

According to research, approximately 90% of all sexual abuse of children is perpetrated by someone the child knows. Many abusers are trusted and loved by the child such as a relative, friend, or neighbor.

It is impossible to discern an abuser by their appearance alone. Most do not fit the stereotypical that probably comes to mind. Abusers may be seemingly well-adjusted outstanding citizens. Some even have families of their own or are children themselves.

Children can sexually abuse other children. Sometimes the contact is developmentally appropriate curiosity but, in some cases, usually when one child is much older and or bigger than the other, the behavior may be abusive. If behavior between children becomes sexually suggestive and/or your gut tells you something is wrong, please intervene!

Many parents find it difficult to accept that their children were abused—oftentimes right under their nose. Offenders will go to great lengths to abuse children and gain access. These are just a few of the things an offender may do:

- *Seek out an approachable child, one who is easy to get to such as a relative, neighbor, or friend.*
- *Establish a relationship with the child by spending time playing with them, volunteering to babysit, becoming their buddy, or buying them games or presents.*

- Break down the child’s resistance to touch by playing games that involve touching such as wrestling and tickling. As a result, children are often confused when the touch becomes sexual.
- Find ways to be alone with the child such as babysitting, inviting them to sleep over, or taking them camping.
- Blame the child and coerce them to keep the secret by making the child feel responsible so they will not tell. They say things like:
 “You know you like the way I touch you.”
 “If you tell, people will think you’re bad.”
 “If you tell I will go to jail.”
 “If you tell your mother, she won’t love you anymore.”

CAC Staff

Kari May
Executive Director



Crystal Powell
Family Advocate



Mary Tewell
*Multidisciplinary Team
Coordinator &
Forensic Interviewer*



Mary Bunyard
Forensic Interviewer



Roles & Responsibilities

The Children’s Advocacy Center is administered by a Governing Board whose role is to promote interdisciplinary communication and training personnel from various Champaign County offices, agencies, departments, and local service providers; to supervise, oversee, and communicate policy for the operation of the Children’s Advocacy Center; to make such reports to contributing

officers, agencies, and departments as may be required; and to act as liaison to the multidisciplinary professionals involved in the Children's Advocacy Center.

The Executive Director, Family Advocate, Multidisciplinary Team Coordinator, and Forensic Interviewer are responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Children's Advocacy Center. Their combined efforts ensure the provision of a coordinated, timely, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary response to child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse allegations. The CAC collaborates with local agencies and service providers to facilitate interviews, make medical, and treatment referrals, and provide support to child victims and their non-offending family members throughout the life of the case.

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Andrew Killian
Ford State's Attorney
Board Member



Board Members



Child Abuse Prevention Month Podcast

OUR FINANCES

Revenue

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Grants

Victims of Crime Act	\$132,310
Department of Children & Family Services	\$81,240
Champaign County Mental Health Board	\$37,080
Attorney General (Violent Crimes Victim Assistance Act)	\$20,500
National Children’s Alliance	\$7,000
Community Foundation of East Central IL	\$1,952

Flexible Income

Law Enforcement Contributions	\$9,860
Community Donations	\$6,065
United Way Payroll deduction donors	\$2,559

Total

\$298,566

Thank You to Our Generous Annual Donors

This past year has been full of difficult yet empowering moments. Because of you and your support we were able to advocate, listen and provide services to help the broken hearts of over 250 children and their families. Your contributions are life changing to the children in our community. On behalf of all of us at the CAC, and the children's whose lives who were given hope through our work, thank you for believing in our Center and your ongoing generosity and support. We couldn't do this important work without you!

Carle Foundation Hospital

Joni & Bill Markel

Adelaide Aime & David Cahill

Dr. Kathleen Buetow

Heidi Ladd & Rick Huls

Sue & Rex Hess

John North & Mary Clow

Mike Williams

Paige Roasting Company

Community Foundation of East Central Illinois