

Welcome to the Child Advocacy Center!

The Schuyler County Child Advocacy Center uses a team approach to partner with children and families who have been affected by physical and sexual violence in order to end child abuse and promote healing.



Upon receipt of a referral from **Child Protective Services** or **Law Enforcement Agencies**, the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) can conduct **Forensic Interviews**, provide **Victim Advocacy Services**, setup **Forensic Medical Exams**, refer for **Mental Health Counseling**, or connect children and families with additional resources. The CAC also offers **Community Education and Awareness** to engage and train youth, professionals, and the general public.

Multi-Disciplinary Team Approach (MDT): MDT Case Review is conducted monthly with a team to ensure services are wrapped around the children and families we serve, including: Law Enforcement, Victim Advocacy Services, Mental Health Providers, Medical Professionals, Child Protective Services, Legal Professionals, Probation, Catholic Charities, and Safe Harbour. MDT is not open to the public and is strictly confidential.

Forensic Interviews (FI's): FI's are conducted by specially trained staff, uniquely skilled in discussions with youth. FI's are not interrogatory, require a parent/guardian's permission, and can be ended by the child at any time. Outside agency officials, and guardians are **not** permitted to attend/observe FI's. Anyone who conducts a Forensic Interview can be subpoenaed to testify in Court, but recorded interviews are strictly protected.

Victim Advocacy: An advocate meets with every parent/guardian to complete paperwork, discuss their needs, and do referrals for counseling, additional services/resources, or Forensic Medical Exams. Clothing, hygiene products, pack and plays, etc. are available as needed. Advocates also offer support to families during the legal process. Our Advocates also assist with scheduling and preparation for Forensic Interviews and Intakes.

Mental Health Counseling: If a child discloses abuse, specialized Trauma-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CF-CBT) is available onsite. The initial meeting (intake) is for the guardian to provide the child's history; the therapists can also explain the therapeutic process and plan for treatment. Our clinicians do get subpoenaed to testify in Court, but cannot recommend custody/visitation or anything outside their scope of expertise.

Community Education and Awareness: The Community Educator attends public events, brings information and resources to the region, and is a certified Facilitator of numerous curriculums to educate children and adults about child abuse and body safety. Focused topics include safer electronics use, appropriate relationships, (cyber) bullying, human trafficking, and protective parenting.