

Serving Abused Children of St. Tammany and Washington Parishes



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

2008 Mad Hatter Tea

Hurry, hurry, don't be late for this very important date... **Saturday, May 10, 2008**, from 2 -4 p.m., St. Scholastica Academy's Gymnasium, the **6th Annual Mad Hatter Tea**. Enjoy tea and activities with that special someone(s), mingle with the Alice in Wonderland characters and the stilt walkers from the New Orleans School of Circus Arts, face painting and finger printing, try your hand at the bean bag toss, enjoy some yummy sandwiches, desserts,

tea or lemonade catered by a local restaurant. The price remains at \$15/person; tickets will be on sale through the CAC (892-3885), and if the past is any indication, it will be a sell-out event, so purchase your tickets now. **Sponsorships** are the backbone of this event, with levels from \$250 to \$5,000. Please consider becoming a sponsor, if you are not already, and help us meet our fundraising goal of \$75,000. This is our major fundraiser for

the year, and a wonderful day for all involved. You don't want to miss the **6th Annual Mad Hatter Tea!**



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Individual Highlights

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All across the USA, via Presidential, gubernatorial and local government proclamations, April is declared Child Abuse Prevention Month. Child abuse and neglect awareness activities are promoted across the country, particularly during this month. Both St. Tammany and Washington Parish Councils are recognizing April as "Child Abuse Prevention Month." In 1989, the Blue Ribbon Campaign had its early beginnings as a Virginia grandmother's tribute to her grandson who died as a result of abuse. She tied a blue ribbon to the antenna of her car as a way to remember him and to alert her

community to the tragedy of child abuse. In an effort to raise community awareness and recognition of this terrible problem, the CAC is engaged in several activities in April and we hope you, our loyal supporters, will join us in this endeavor. We have purchased ribbon car magnets, which will be available through our office. The St. Tammany Exchange Club has purchased blue bookmarks and is giving them away through the library branches. *Sophisticated Woman Magazine* is hosting its annual "Hats Off!" luncheon with the

CAC as the recipient for auction proceeds. Chico's is having a CAC shopping day on Saturday, April 12, and on Friday, April 25, and the CAC will receive 10% on all purchases. Please show your support by patronizing the events and businesses that are donating to us, displaying a blue ribbon on your car, and voicing a no-tolerance policy on child abuse.

“Justice” Served Through the CAC...

We wanted to delve into the aspects of our tag line, **justice, hope, and healing**, in our 2008 newsletters and asked three disciplines of our Multi-Disciplinary Team to address, the role the CAC plays in serving justice. The following are their comments:

From Hammy Gascon, the District Attorney's Office:

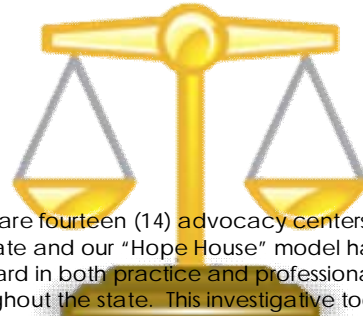
For the past twelve (12) years the District Attorney's office and the Children's Advocacy Center have enjoyed a partnership to protect our children from sexual abuse. The Children's Advocacy Center provides to prosecutors in my office documented evidence and statements from children in a non threatening and friendly environment which are used to further our criminal court cases in this very serious and sensitive area of criminal law violations. The interviewer is a trained and skilled professional following the requirements of state law to record the testimony of the child and to reduce the number of traumatic interviews a child must endure.

From Aubrey Jones, Washington Parish Sheriff's Office:

In my experience, Hope House has been most useful in cases involving young children and children with special needs, such as autism and mental illness. The interviewers' training and experience enables them to ascertain details about the incidents that we would never be able to get ourselves. The video and audio recordings of the child's own statements are so powerful and effective in getting justice.

Hope House gathers all of the agencies involved in the investigation to review cases and discuss new research and issues in the field. They help all of us learn and grow in our profession while building a strong working relationship with all agencies that are involved.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to let everyone know how important Hope House is to Washington Parish.



There are fourteen (14) advocacy centers throughout the state and our “Hope House” model has set the standard in both practice and professionalism throughout the state. This investigative tool has resulted in many child abuse convictions and has brought about a heightened awareness of these horrible crimes. I am proud to be associated with the Children's Advocacy Center and the wonderful work they do on behalf of the criminal justice system in Washington and St. Tammany Parishes.

From Beverley Connor, MSW, LCSW, CAC Therapist:

Many of the families that I work with come for services soon after the CAC forensic interview. Their questions regarding the process always include “where is the justice for my child?” In counseling, I try NOT to focus on the disposition of the case, but rather on the child's own sense of justice, demonstrated by their bravery in disclosing the abuse. We concentrate on how children can cope with their feelings of fear and betrayal, on how they can protect themselves, and ways for them to increase their sense of personal power.

When we discuss feelings about the perpetrators, I often hear a desire for them to get help, especially when it is a family member. For the parents and caregivers of these children, we offer comfort, safety, and security in our offices with much needed space for “venting” their own emotions. We understand the effects of the abuse and how stressful it is while going through the legal system. We can support them in their efforts to restore normalcy within their families.

Hopefully the legal system will appropriately punish the offender, but the greater justice for caregivers is watching their children heal from the events of the abuse and recognizing that they are survivors who will go on to thrive within their lives.

Insert Side B



Vanguard Beauty School Student Council and advisor visit the CAC and present check



Jr. League of Greater Covington presenting annual gift to Dorothy



Teddy Bears from the Northlake Republican Women's Teddy Bear Tea



Covington Mayor Candace Watkins draws winning raffle tickets while Dorothy and Liz look on



Kevin Davis presenting St. Tammany Parish check to Dorothy and Liz



Northshore Square Mall fountain money for Hope House

At right – Hornado Desoto and Sacagawea were one of several historical characters whom Tchefuncte Middle School students could talk to for a charge of 25 cents. The proceeds from this creative fundraiser came to the CAC.



Calendar of Upcoming Events...

Month of April –
The CAC, Resource Banks, the Whitney Bank in Covington, and Metairie Bank on Hwy. 22 will be selling personalized car magnets for the CAC in an awareness campaign for Child Abuse Prevention Month. Help the CAC while bringing awareness to the problem of child abuse.

April 1- Hats Off! Luncheon, "Sophisticated Woman" magazine, Beau Chene Country Club. The CAC is the charity benefit of the auction. To offer an auction item or to purchase a ticket call 985-893-7350 or www.sophisticatedwoman.com.

April 12 and April 25 – All Day - CHICO'S of Mandeville is fundraising for the CAC – 10% of all sales donated to the CAC. Bring your friends to this event, shop and donate at the same time!

May 10- Mad Hatter Tea, St. Scholastica Academy gym, downtown Covington, 2 – 4 p.m. Tickets are on sale now!

June 12-14, Jumpin' for Jazz, Lagniappe Farms in Folsom. Auction will benefit the CAC. Activities for children and an excellent hunter/jumper show.

Thanks to our generous friends and supporters...

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Stephen Dugal of Northwestern Mutual Insurance makes a donation honoring Bill Smith's volunteerism with the CAC



Lisa Giacona & Tiffany Giardelli of Resource Bank, visiting the CAC after Jeans' Day at the bank.

Children's Advocacy Center

Present this coupon and your Winn-Dixie Customer Reward Card to the cashier at checkout. The cashier will scan them both to activate your account. Then every time you shop at Winn-Dixie, you can earn money for our organization when you use your Customer Reward Card.

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MAKE YOUR SHOPPING DOLLARS HELP THE CAC

We're now a Winn Dixie Community Partner! Clip the above coupon and take it with you next time you shop at Winn Dixie. The cashier will scan it to your Winn Dixie Shopper card and the CAC will receive a donation from Winn Dixie based on your purchases, now and future. You may

select more than one Community Partner to share your shopping dollars.

If you are an on-line shopper, there are many retailers who make a contribution to non-profits when you shop through Either www.iGive.com or www.Goodshop.com. We're listed as the St. Tammany Childrens Advocacy Center.

KIDS' EXPO

OUR ALICE, RABBIT AND QUEEN



Covington Rotarians Jerry Aldrich, Kathy Smith, and Sam Gordon present NCA training check to the CAC



Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings

It's all about teamwork here at the CAC- multidisciplinary teamwork that is! One large role of the CAC is to host a monthly multidisciplinary team meeting, otherwise known as the MDT, where all investigating agencies come together to review and discuss each case.

In the field of child abuse, the MDT includes professionals from each of the seven disciplines: Law Enforcement, Child Protection, Prosecution, Mental Health, Medical,

Victims Advocate and Forensic Interviewer. The collaboration of these disciplines ensures that the needs of the children and their families are met and justice is served.

Each discipline serves a unique purpose, but all work together to ensure the family receives services throughout the investigative process. Each team member strives to expand and improve their particular expertise while sharing this knowledge and experience with the team

and the communities they serve.

The MDT case review is held once a month at the CAC/Hope House and every other month at either Franklinton Police Dept. or the OCS offices in Bogalusa. These meetings are an essential part of the investigation and allow the MDT to discuss each case in detail and exchange valuable information. The result of this important collaboration of child abuse professionals is a strong team united towards the same goal - Justice!



*"It's all about
teamwork here at
the CAC –
Multi-Disciplinary
Teamwork, that is!"*

7 Steps to Protecting Our Children

The CAC has adopted a prevention program, called "Stewards of Children" from the national organization, Darkness to Light. This 2-1/2 hour inter-active presentation shows adults the life-long effects of abuse, what they can do to prevent the opportunity for child sexual abuse, and how to respond when a child reveals abuse or when one suspects abuse has occurred. Call the CAC to talk about training for your group of adults who want to know more about protecting children from sexual abuse! Briefly, the 7 Steps to Protecting our Children are:

- 1) **Learn the Facts and Understand the Risks to Children;** make decisions for children based on the facts of child sexual abuse.
- 2) **Minimize Opportunity** and dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse.
- 3) **Talk About It** openly with your children.
- 4) **Stay Alert;** signs of sexual abuse are often present but can be emotional or behavioral, not physical or verbal. Be knowledgeable in order to be alert!
- 5) **Make a Plan.** Learn where to go, who to call, and how to react in the best interest of your child as a precautionary measure.
- 6) **Act on Suspicions.** Being a silent bystander to sexual abuse can contribute to a lifetime of psychological and emotional problems for a child victim.
- 7) **Get Involved** by volunteering and financially supporting organizations that fight the tragedy of child sexual abuse. Make your community a safer place for *all children*.

Learn more:

<http://www.cachopehouse.org/7steps.html>

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***Justice, Hope,
and Healing***

A fully accredited member of the National Children's Alliance



Visit our website at:
www.cachopehouse.org

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About Our Organization

CAC Staff Members

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Bethany Case,
Forensic Interviewers
Liz Taurman, Resource
Development
Debe Jones: Office Mgr.

CAC Support Staff

Therapists:
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Lori Forte, M.Ed., LPC Intern
Play Therapist:
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