



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER PROTOCOL FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATION OF CHILD SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE

PREFACE/INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENT:

We, the undersigned agencies, by and through our directors/administrators, and through our designated representatives, do hereby agree to the following policy supporting the creation, development, implementation, and operation of the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center ("the CAC" or "the Center"), to wit:

We recognize that the current system, which deals with these young victims, although comprised of agencies committed to the protection and best interests of every child in Champaign County, often cannot meet many of their needs.

We are a system designed for and oriented to adults, a system that has few provisions and concessions to the specific needs and fragile states of those children who are, through no choice of their own, expected to enter into yet another threatening adult environment.

As participants in this system, we recognize that many children remain at risk for re-victimization by excessive interviews, lack of communication between agencies, incomplete investigations, and the unavailability of immediate and long-term medical and mental health treatment.

Having recognized these things, we are supportive of the creation, development, and implementation of a child-oriented program, which establishes a cooperative effort between the undersigned agencies, wherein a multidisciplinary team approach is utilized in the investigation, assessment, referral for prosecution, and medical/mental health treatment involving child victims of sexual or serious physical abuse.

Each of the undersigned agencies has specific responsibilities with regard to the investigation, assessment, medical/mental health treatment, and prosecution of cases of child sexual and serious physical abuse. We agree to support the concepts and adhere to the guidelines as outlined. We note that, on occasion, exceptions to the guidelines will be necessary, and at such times exceptions will be granted with the



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agreement of all parties involved. We, the undersigned, do hereby acknowledge that the multidisciplinary team approach, through the institution of the Children's Advocacy Center, serves to enhance the individual efforts of each agency. We acknowledge that through these respective agencies, and through public support and awareness, the Children's Advocacy Center unifies our community in the daily struggle to ensure the protection and preservation of the children of Champaign County.

General Provisions

1. Each agency works with and assists the others and the Children's Advocacy Center to ensure that the best interests and protection of children are served.
2. All reasonable efforts are made by each agency to coordinate each step of the investigation/assessment process in order to minimize the number of interviews and interviewers to which the child is subjected, thus reducing the potential trauma to the child.
3. All agencies are invited and encouraged to attend training sponsored by the Children's Advocacy Center. Whenever possible, the Children's Advocacy Center provides financial support for professionals and volunteers to attend specialized training.
4. It is expressly understood that each agency works within its departmental mandates and policies. Nothing contained herein supersedes the statutes, rules or regulations governing each agency. To the extent that any provision of this agreement is inconsistent with any such statute, rule or regulation, the statute, rule or regulation prevails.
5. All agencies/organizations participating in the Children's Advocacy Center agree to provide trained professionals with skills in interviewing, assessment, and investigation to handle cases of child sexual and serious physical abuse. All investigatory interviews conducted at the Center are conducted by personnel who have successfully completed an approved course in forensic interviewing of children alleged to have been sexually and physically abused.
6. All agencies/organizations participating in the Children's Advocacy Center share pertinent case information with the appropriate agency except as prohibited by law.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center is to coordinate a timely, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary response to child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse allegations in a safe, agency-neutral, child-focused setting.

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center facilitates investigations, makes medical and treatment referrals, and assists with any consequent legal proceedings in order to protect and support the children it serves and their families. The CAC also assists in coordinating education and prevention services.

PHILOSOPHY:

- 1) Each child and his/her family have an inherent right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- 2) Child abuse is a problem in this community and the community is responsible for addressing the issues of education, detection, treatment, and prevention.
- 3) No single agency, individual or discipline possesses the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to provide all of the assistance needed by abused children and their families. Combining the experience and professional knowledge of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, medical and mental health professionals, and victim advocacy programs provides more effective and efficient handling of these cases.
- 4) The protection and best interests of each child is foremost in all recommendations related to a multidisciplinary response.
- 5) It is desirable to reduce the number of interviews that a child victim or child witness must participate in and those interviews are conducted by a specially trained interviewer in a neutral and child-focused setting.

ROLES OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

The following agencies provide the members of the multidisciplinary teams that conduct and assist with investigations of allegations of child sexual and serious physical abuse:

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is the state agency mandated to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect, including all allegations of sexual and serious physical abuse of children by family members or caretakers. In all cases, DCFS is required to ensure that the child is in a safe environment and, if not, to take appropriate action. DCFS operates the State Central Register, which provides a toll-free number for reporting child abuse.

Law enforcement agencies are established by law to protect the communities they serve through conscientious enforcement of the criminal laws. They are equipped to receive reports of criminal violations, to conduct investigations, and to identify and apprehend alleged offenders. They are also equipped to provide for the safety of victims and witnesses, collect, preserve and present evidence to the appropriate authorities, and provide cooperation and assistance to other agencies.

The State's Attorney's Office prosecutes violations of the criminal law and cases of child abuse and neglect.

Mental health agencies provide assessments/evaluations and behavioral health treatment to victims and their families.

Hospitals and physicians provide appropriate medical evaluations, which may include history, examination, diagnostic studies, and treatment of victims by physicians and other medical personnel with specialized training in child sexual abuse and physical abuse cases.

Victim Advocacy is provided to victims and their families through the Children's Advocacy Center's Case Manager and other area advocacy programs throughout the investigation and subsequent legal proceedings.

ELIGIBLE CASES:

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center is established to facilitate a multidisciplinary response to all allegations of sexual abuse and serious physical abuse of minors under the age of 18 who live in, have lived in, or who are currently located in Champaign County. Cases involving an alleged victim who is of the age when he/she can ordinarily consent to sexual activity under the law and where the alleged offender is not a family member or in a position of trust, authority, or supervision in relation to the victim, fall outside of the CAC Protocol, even though the victim is under 18 years of age.

Serious physical abuse is defined as those cases with allegations listed under Level #1 Standards for Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations (DCFS Rule 300). Level #1 allegations of harm include:

- Death
- Brain Damage/Skull Fracture
- Multiple Fractures or Fractures Suspicious of Abuse
- Third Degree Burns
- Subdural Hematoma
- Internal Injuries
- Wounds
- Torture

Level #1 allegations for child sexual abuse include:

- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Sexual Penetration
- Sexual Exploitation
- Sexual Molestation
- Human Trafficking of Children

Interviews with alleged adult perpetrators (age 17 and over) are not conducted at the Center and alleged adult perpetrators are not allowed on CAC premises for any reason whatsoever. Interviews of alleged juvenile offenders are permitted at the Center in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in the Protocol for Interviewing Alleged Juvenile Offenders adopted by the CAC Governing Board on May 23, 2002, including subsequent revisions, which is incorporated herein by reference.

REFERRAL AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

Whenever a law enforcement agency receives a report of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse of a child under the age of 18 by a family or household member, guardian, caretaker, or paramour of a parent or guardian, that agency forwards the information to the **DCFS Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-2873)** as soon as possible.

Whenever DCFS receives a report of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse of a child under the age of 18, DCFS forwards that information to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the matter as soon as possible. DCFS also provides to the Children's Advocacy Center a copy of SACWIS (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System) forms received from the State Central Register for Champaign County cases containing Level #1 allegations of child sexual or physical abuse.

An Assistant State's Attorney is available for consultation concerning legal issues during the entire investigative process.

Except when impracticable due to the circumstances of a particular case, if the initial investigation by DCFS or a law enforcement agency indicates that a child has been the victim of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse, that agency contacts the Children's Advocacy Center and schedules a time for a comprehensive investigatory interview of the child at the Center with the assistance of the multidisciplinary team. Interviews are scheduled in a timely fashion through the Children's Advocacy Center staff, which notifies the other members of the multidisciplinary team as defined by the needs of the case. The make-up of the multidisciplinary team is case specific and varies from case-to-case.

Except where necessitated by the circumstances of a particular case, investigating agencies do not conduct lengthy or comprehensive investigatory interviews of victims of child sexual or serious physical abuse other than at the Children's Advocacy Center and with the assistance of the multidisciplinary team.

In the event that a comprehensive investigatory interview with a child victim occurs outside the Children's Advocacy Center, it is the responsibility of the responding agency or department to contact the Children's Advocacy Center within 24 hours. The responding agency or department provides the Center with pertinent case information so that CAC services for the child and their non-offending family members can be initiated.

CONTACTING THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER STAFF:

Children's Advocacy Center staff can be reached during normal working hours (Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at **(217) 384-1266**. A member of the Children's Advocacy Center staff is accessible by pager at all times. The pager number is **(217) 373-7108**. A list of the on-call staff members' names, pager numbers and home telephone numbers is provided to Champaign County law enforcement agencies and the local office of DCFS.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURES:

The Children's Advocacy Center is used at all times unless it is determined by law enforcement and/or DCFS that it is more appropriate to conduct an interview at another suitable location. Safety of the child shall always be an overriding consideration. The Children's Advocacy Center is used when the preliminary investigation determines that a comprehensive investigatory interview is appropriate.

In the case of allegations of abuse by family or household members, guardians, caretakers or paramours of a parent or guardian, investigatory interviews at the Children's Advocacy Center are conducted by the individual designated by agreement between DCFS and the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the case. In all other cases, the representative of the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the case conducts the interviews, unless they request that another member of the multidisciplinary team conducts the interview.

Whenever possible, investigatory interviews are conducted by a single individual, with the other members of the multidisciplinary team able to hear and observe the interview by audio/visual transmission to a separate room. Observers of investigatory interviews are limited to law enforcement officers, Assistant State's Attorneys, DCFS personnel, and personnel from agencies contracted by DCFS to provide foster care case management services (e.g., Center for Youth & Family Solutions, Lutheran Social Services, etc.). At the discretion of the multidisciplinary team, persons serving internships with the aforementioned departments/agencies, as well as interns for the Children's Advocacy Center, are permitted to observe interviews. Attorneys are permitted to observe investigatory interviews at the Children's Advocacy Center of any child for whom they have been appointed *guardian ad litem*.

The child being interviewed is informed that other professionals in another room are monitoring the discussion. When appropriate, the parent/caregiver is informed of this as well.

Parents/caretakers of children interviewed at the Center, attorneys for non-offending parents/caretakers, attorneys for suspects, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), mental health professionals, medical personnel, and victim advocates are not permitted to participate in or observe investigatory interviews at the Children's Advocacy Center. At the discretion of the multidisciplinary team, non-offending parents/caretakers, CASAs, Assistant State's Attorneys, mental health professionals, medical personnel, and victim advocates may be included in pre and/or post interview briefings.

Because investigatory interviews are not conducted in a confidential setting, notes taken during the interview are not privileged or confidential and are subject to discovery and disclosure in any legal action, civil or criminal, to which the interview may be relevant. Law enforcement and DCFS personnel are to comply with their respective departmental protocols for the retention and/or destruction of notes and records.

Whenever possible, the interviewer consults with the members of the multidisciplinary team before the investigatory interview to clarify the matters to be discussed in the interview. Whenever possible, the interviewer and members of the multidisciplinary team meet immediately after the conclusion of the interview to discuss and coordinate plans for additional investigation as well as appropriate treatment referrals for the child and his/her family. Multidisciplinary team members are encouraged to suggest issues addressing CAC procedures and operations at pre and post interview briefings.

RECORDING OF INTERVIEWS

All forensic interviews of children ages 17 and under conducted at the Children's Advocacy Center are audio and visually recorded to provide an accurate record of the child's behavior and statements as well as to document that the interview techniques used were appropriate and legally sound.

When applicable, the child's parent, legal guardian or temporary legal custodian is asked to sign a form acknowledging that he/she understands that the minor child's interview will be recorded. If the parent/guardian/temporary legal custodian refuses to sign the acknowledgment form, the investigation will proceed as planned. If the adult who accompanies the child to the Center is not the child's parent, legal guardian or temporary legal custodian, arrangements to obtain the signature of the parent/guardian/temporary legal custodian will be coordinated by Center staff, the investigating law enforcement agency, or DCFS. A copy of the acknowledgment form is kept in the client's file at the CAC and the original is provided to the lead investigating agency. In the event that the child's parent/guardian/temporary legal custodian has been identified as a suspect, he/she will not be asked to sign the acknowledgment form. A CAC staff member also completes a form documenting that s/he advised the child's parent/guardian/temporary legal custodian that the interview with their child would be recorded. That form is kept in the client's file at the CAC.

CAC staff ensures proper functioning of the recording equipment prior to the start of the interview. The recording begins as the child and the forensic interviewer enter the interview room and recording continues until the child and the forensic interviewer have exited the interview room. If at any time it becomes necessary to interrupt the interview, the interviewer states the reason for the interruption, the time at which the interruption occurred, and the time at which the interview resumed.

Upon completion of the interview, the first compact disc recording is tendered to the investigating law enforcement agency. Law enforcement agencies follow all statutory requirements as well as their respective departmental procedures for tagging, logging and storing evidence. The integrity and confidentiality of recordings produced are preserved and protected in the same manner as other pieces of evidence obtained during the investigation. Two additional copies of the interview are provided to the investigating law enforcement agency for submission to the State's Attorney's Office, if necessary. The Children's Advocacy Center is not responsible for transcription of the recorded interview. Transcription is the responsibility of the investigating law enforcement agency, DCFS, or the State's Attorney's Office.

If applicable, two copies of the interview are provided to DCFS for purposes of case documentation.

Any agency receiving a recording of an interview conducted at the Children's Advocacy Center is required to acknowledge receipt of same, in writing, and the signed acknowledgment is retained in the appropriate CAC client file.

The Children's Advocacy Center does not retain a copy of the interview and the interview is deleted from the recording system's computer hard drive seven (7) days following completion of the interview.

In the event that there is a need for other members of the multidisciplinary team to access the recording, team members will contact the State's Attorney's Office or the investigating law enforcement agency to request and schedule access to the recording.

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS:

If additional follow-up interviews of a child are necessary, they are conducted at the Children's Advocacy Center whenever possible. The agency requiring the additional interview(s) schedules the interview(s) with the Children's Advocacy Center and notifies any other agencies involved in the case. Children's Advocacy Center staff also notifies other the members of the multidisciplinary team of the interview(s), as appropriate.

RECORD OF THE INTERVIEW:

As soon as possible following the conclusion of each investigatory interview, a representative of the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the case or a representative of the Department of Children and Family Services who conducted or observed the interview completes a Record of the Interview. That Record identifies the name, date of birth, address, parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child interviewed and their addresses. The Record also identifies the person conducting the interview and all persons who observed the interview, as well as the time, date, and place of the interview. The Record also identifies the person(s) alleged to have committed any act of child sexual or serious physical abuse and the name(s), date of birth, address, and parent(s)/guardian(s) of all alleged victims, if different than or in addition to the child interviewed. The Record also contains a brief summary of the interview.

The original Record of the Interview is retained by the law enforcement agency preparing it. A copy is retained by the Children's Advocacy Center. Additional copies are provided to participating agencies involved in the case as requested.

CASE REVIEWS/MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEETINGS/PEER REVIEW:

In accordance with the CAC's philosophy of promoting a team approach to the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases and collaboration in addressing the needs of children and families served by the Children's Advocacy Center, the CAC

schedules monthly Multidisciplinary Team Case Review meetings in order to facilitate a process in which professionals work together more effectively and efficiently.

Team meetings are generally held at noon on the first Tuesday of each month. The CAC prepares the agenda and notifies Team members of the cases scheduled for review approximately one week prior to the meeting date. All open cases are subject to review; however, all cases opened within the last 30 days and not discussed at a previous Team meeting are included on the agenda. Any Team member may request that a case be added to the agenda by contacting the CAC. A case that involves some urgency may be scheduled as needed and case-specific Team meetings may be arranged at the request of any Team member. An involved agency or individual may request a review at any time by contacting CAC staff.

All professionals directly involved in an identified case attend Team meetings (i.e., Police Investigators/Detectives, DCFS Investigators, DCFS Caseworkers, Assistant State's Attorneys, SAO Victim Advocates, Child Protection Team personnel, CAC staff, Counselors/Therapists, Crisis Intervention Counselors, etc.). If the designated agency representative is unable to attend, another person with adequate knowledge of the case should be present on behalf of that agency.

During the case review meeting, multidisciplinary team members discuss the status of the investigation, family dynamics, developmental/emotional disabilities, socio-economics, legal status, etc. of each case. Team members provide varying perspectives to the situation. Team members also bring to the case review their experience working with families and victims of abuse and can share with multidisciplinary team members the benefits of relevant training they have received. The discussion leads to ideas, suggestions, and decisions to assist the investigation and the family. Multidisciplinary team members are also encouraged to suggest issues addressing CAC procedures and operations at case review meetings.

Additional information regarding case review meetings can be found in the Protocol For Multidisciplinary Team Case Review Meetings adopted by the CAC Governing Board on November 21, 2002, including subsequent revisions, which is incorporated herein by reference.

The Children's Advocacy Center will provide opportunities for investigators to participate in a formalized peer review process for child forensic interviewers, both on the local and regional levels.

FIREARMS:

Law enforcement officers not directly participating in face-to-face interviews with children are permitted to carry firearms while at the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center. Any officer participating in a face-to-face interview with a child must either remove and secure his/her firearm or he/she must ensure that his/her firearm is concealed from the child at all times.

MEDICAL EVALUATIONS:

In cases of reports of recent trauma or abuse, DCFS and law enforcement investigators responding to the report are responsible for scheduling a medical evaluation. In cases involving delayed reporting of abuse, if an appropriate medical evaluation has not been completed, the Children's Advocacy Center staff assists in scheduling medical evaluations in the following cases:

- all cases involving allegations of sexual penetration;
- all cases in which an investigator has reason to believe that evidence of sexual molestation may be present;
- all cases in which it is alleged that the child has been sexually abused within the preceding 72 hours;
- all cases in which the child has genital complaints;
- all allegedly sexually abused pre-pubertal children;
- all allegedly sexually abused adolescents will be referred to the Child Protection Team at Carle Clinic; however, the Child Protection Team may elect to refer adolescents to the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner or to their personal physicians;
- all children alleged to have been seriously physically abused;
- any case in which an investigator or parent requests a medical examination.

The purpose of the medical examination is to evaluate potential physical and psychological injury to the victim and possible presence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). The medical examination also serves to detect and preserve any and all forensic evidence of sexual or physical abuse.

Child victims requiring a specialized medical examination are referred to the Child Protection Team at Carle Clinic. On those occasions when the Child Protection Team receives a report of a sexually abused child from an agency/individual other than the Children's Advocacy Center, the Child Protection Team evaluates the report and, except in unusual circumstances, defers initial evaluation to the Children's Advocacy Center. The Child Protection Team makes every effort to schedule immediately an examination for any child who has been sexually abused within the preceding 72 hours and works collaboratively with the Children's Advocacy Center, law enforcement agencies, and DCFS to ensure that all referrals are seen as promptly as possible. In the event that the Child Protection Team is not available, child victims are referred to the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner at Carle Hospital Emergency Department. Referrals of CAC clients to the Child Protection Team and/or the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner are made by the CAC Case Manager or DCFS upon request of the investigating team. For all children referred for medical evaluation, Children's Advocacy Center staff provides medical personnel with appropriate information that expedites the evaluation process and minimizes distress to the child. If requested by the family/guardian, CAC staff accompanies the child to the medical examination.

To the extent permitted by law, reports of medical examinations are provided to DCFS and law enforcement investigators. Medical examination findings are also shared with the multidisciplinary team at pre and post interview briefings, if available, and at case review meetings, as confidentiality permits.

No child is denied medical services due to inability to pay for those services. In cases where DCFS is involved, the cost of specialized medical examinations may be covered by the Department of Children and Family Services when the child is referred to Carle Clinic/Hospital. In cases where DCFS is not involved, Carle Clinic/Hospital bills the client's insurance company or processes payment through the Department of Human Services (medical card). Medical examinations not covered by one of the above are routinely covered through victim compensation funds administered by the Illinois Attorney General's Office and CAC staff assists families in accessing those funds. In extreme situations when none of the aforementioned applies, CAC staff assists the client in accessing other emergency funds, such as those available through Rape Advocacy, Counseling and Education Services (R.A.C.E.S.).

CRISIS INTERVENTION/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

Through contracts with local therapists (hereinafter referred to as Crisis Intervention Counselors), the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center makes crisis intervention services available to every child referred to the Center and their non-offending family members/caregivers. These services are provided at no cost to clients of the Children's Advocacy Center. Crisis intervention services include: crisis intervention assessments for child victims and their non-offending family members; crisis counseling and emotional support in the short-term; education, information and referral; and linkage to long-term treatment, when appropriate.

Whenever possible, crisis intervention assessments are accomplished in the child-friendly, child-focused atmosphere of the Children's Advocacy Center. Follow-up services are typically delivered in the offices of Crisis Intervention Counselors contracted by the CAC to provide crisis intervention services. Telephone contacts are also utilized to provide emotional support as needed to children and their families.

Crisis intervention services continue until the client has been linked with long-term mental health and/or counseling services, if deemed appropriate. In most cases, it is expected that crisis intervention services will continue for a period of 6-8 weeks. While recognizing that the family has the right to decline those services, the Crisis Intervention Counselor and the CAC Case Manager advise the child's parent/caretaker of the availability and importance of mental health counseling to child sexual and/or physical abuse victims and strongly encourage the parent/caretaker to seek such counseling at an appropriate facility.

As part of the Children's Advocacy Center's multidisciplinary team and subject to applicable confidentiality protections, the Crisis Intervention Counselors also attend meetings, staffings, and case reviews at various locations and advocate for clients and their families.

The CAC has an agreement with the Community Elements (formerly the Mental Health Center of Champaign County), which serves as the designated provider of community mental health services for Champaign County, to provide follow-up mental health services to victims and their non-offending family members. Those services include individual counseling, family counseling, play therapy, art therapy and advocacy services. The CAC makes every effort to refer clients to services that will not impose a financial burden on the client and also assists them with accessing financial resources to pay the costs of counseling services. In the event that the family wishes to access mental health services through private healthcare providers, the Crisis Intervention Counselor and the CAC Case Manager will facilitate and coordinate the delivery of those services to the extent possible. No child is denied mental health services due to inability to pay for those services.

Mental health professionals are notified by the CAC of case reviews and are invited to attend. After receiving a signed authorization for release of information, mental health professionals may attend case reviews to communicate the needs of the child and to share information about the child and/or the family's emotional state. Families may decline to sign the confidentiality waiver. To the extent permitted by law and in keeping with the need to protect the clients' right to confidentiality, mental health professionals participating in case reviews agree to cooperate fully with the Children's Advocacy Center and the multidisciplinary team, and to abide by this Protocol. Mental health providers maintain client files separate from those of the CAC.

VICTIM ADVOCACY SERVICES:

Victim advocacy services are provided to child victims and their non-offending family members through the CAC Case Manager, the Crisis Intervention Counselors, and other area advocacy programs throughout the investigation and subsequent legal proceedings. Those services include assistance with obtaining protective orders, legal advocacy, housing, public assistance, domestic violence intervention, and transportation. Community-based programs providing advocacy services include, but are not limited to: A Woman's Place, Community Elements, Rape Advocacy, Counseling and Education Services (R.A.C.E.S.), and the Victim Advocacy Program of the Champaign County State's Attorney's Office. The CAC Case Manager and the Crisis Intervention Counselors maintain information on community-based advocacy services and make that information available to those receiving services from the Children's Advocacy Center.

As part of its victim advocacy services, CAC staff follows each case throughout the investigation and prosecution, if applicable, and provides clients with on-going information about the progress of their case through the juvenile and/or criminal justice systems. The CAC Case Manager notifies clients of the filing of criminal charges and is available to attend court hearings with family members, if requested. The CAC Case Manager also assists victims in obtaining financial compensation through the Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program of the Illinois Attorney General and other available programs. Such assistance may include identifying and notifying crime victims of the availability of compensation, assisting them with

application forms and procedures, obtaining necessary documentation, and/or checking on the status of claims.

All cases resulting in criminal prosecution also receive services through the Victim Advocacy Program of the Champaign County State's Attorney's Office. The Victim Advocacy Program schedules meetings to familiarize the victim with the criminal court process in order to make court proceedings more understandable and less frightening to children and their families. These meetings can be held at the CAC and may also include tours of the courthouse facilities, including the courtroom where the child may be called upon to testify. Through these meetings, SAO Victim Advocates attempt to assess the child victim's ability to function within the court proceedings and communicate that information to the prosecuting attorney. Child Victim-Witness Counselors also accompany children and their families to hearings, providing support and advocacy throughout all consequent legal proceedings.

The Victim Advocacy Program initiates and maintains written, telephone, and/or personal contact with victims of criminal cases filed by the State's Attorney's Office and the staff of that Program provides guidance and support to victims throughout their involvement with the criminal justice system, which may include accompanying crime victims to court. The Victim Advocacy Program also identifies and refers victims to appropriate community-based services and develops and distributes informational brochures for use by crime victims.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY:

The CAC promotes policies, practices and procedures that are culturally competent. Cultural competency is defined as the capacity to function in more than one culture, requiring the ability to appreciate, understand and interact with members of diverse populations within the local community. Cultural competence involves the awareness of cultural differences and the integration of this awareness into practical skills that enhance one's ability to adequately serve diverse populations. Diversity issues influence nearly every aspect of working with children and families, from welcoming a child to the Center, employing effective interviewing techniques, gathering information, selecting appropriate mental health providers and securing help for a family in a manner which is likely to be utilized.

It is the policy of the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center that children and families from all backgrounds feel welcomed and acknowledged by staff, multidisciplinary team members, and Governing Board members, regardless of their appearance, background or beliefs. While receiving services at the Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center, children and families of all backgrounds are welcomed, valued and respected. To effectively meet the child's needs, Center personnel and multidisciplinary team members attempt to understand the child's world-view and adapt practices as needed and as appropriate. The team provides services to a diversified target population regardless of age, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental challenges, socio-economic status or any other cultural descriptors. CAC services are

provided free of charge. No victim referred through the multidisciplinary team process is denied services based on inability to pay.

The CAC's work environment promotes the highest levels of performance and integrity from its employees and other members of the multidisciplinary team. In keeping with this commitment, the Children's Advocacy Center strives to create an environment where its employees and multidisciplinary team members are valued as individuals who together comprise the working team.

Clients, CAC employees, multidisciplinary team members, Governing Board members and anyone else with whom we have dealings are treated with respect, dignity and fairness. Members of the CAC team promote not only awareness of the issues surrounding cultural diversity but demonstrate sensitivity to these issues by interacting in an appropriate manner with members of other cultures.

Additional information can be found in the Cultural Competency Plan adopted by the CAC Governing Board on May 24, 2012, including subsequent revisions, which is incorporated herein by reference.

When an investigation involves non-English-speaking children and family members, the CAC makes provisions to overcome any barriers in communication by enlisting the assistance of bi-lingual parties. The CAC does not use family members to interpret during child forensic interviews conducted at the Center. The CAC maintains a list of private interpreters as well as interpreters associated with the University of Illinois. The CAC also maintains a list of sign language interpreters to provide assistance for the hearing impaired. Prior to their involvement in an investigation or follow-up services, CAC staff orients interpreters to the applicable CAC and multidisciplinary team procedures.

CASE TRACKING:

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center tracks each case referred to the Center, both manually and electronically. When a case is first referred to the CAC, the Case Manager opens a file and assigns a case number to the case based on the year and sequential number of the case (e.g., 2013-CAC-100 would be the 100th case referred to the CAC during the year 2013). The CAC case number is an identity number that is used on all documents referring to this particular case. The Case Manager also enters case information in the CAC computer database.

The CAC file for each case contains the following:

- A completed Social History Form
- A copy of the Record of the Interview
- A copy of the SACWIS Form, if applicable
 - Upon receiving notification from DCFS that a particular case has been designated as "unfounded," the CAC destroys the SACWIS form for that case

- A copy of the Acknowledgement of Recording form signed by the child's parent/guardian/temporary legal custodian
- Notice of Recording form signed by CAC staff
- Receipt of Recording form(s) signed by law enforcement and/or DCFS
- Authorizations for Release of Information signed by parent/caretaker and child, if applicable
- Copies of reports provided to the CAC by the multidisciplinary team
- Copies of case correspondence
- Documentation of Case Review Meetings

The CAC maintains a computer database for tracking the status of cases referred to the Center. To the extent permitted by law, members of the multidisciplinary team provide information for inclusion in the CAC computer database. To the extent available, the database includes the following information for each case:

- CAC Case Number
- Hotline Report Date
- Date Case Opened
- Date Case Closed
- Referral Source
- Reason for Referral
- Name of Assistant State's Attorney
- Name of DCFS Investigator
- Responsible Law Enforcement Agency
- Name of Law Enforcement Investigator
- Demographics for Child
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone
 - Date of Birth
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Guardian at time of abuse
 - Previous involvement with the CAC
 - Information on Medical Examination
- Information on Initial Investigatory Interview
 - Date
 - Location
 - MDT members contacted to participate
 - Agency conducting interview
 - Agencies observing interview
 - Pre-Interview Briefing participants
 - Post-Interview Briefing participants
 - Recommendations
- Information on Additional Investigatory Interviews
 - Date

- Location
- Reason for additional interview
- Agency conducting interview
- Support Service Referrals
 - Type of Referral
 - Date of Referral
 - Person Contacted
 - Type of Contact
- Therapist Information
 - Name of Agency
 - Name of Counselor
 - Evaluation Date
 - Number of Sessions
 - Disposition
- Guardian Information
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone
- Case Review Dates
- Case Notes
- Perpetrator Information
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Relation to Victim
 - Date of Birth
 - Age
 - Guardian Information
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone
 - Date of most recent incident
 - Frequency of abuse
 - Allegations
 - Location of abuse
 - Diagnosed results of abuse
 - DCFS Disposition
 - Law Enforcement Disposition
 - Charges filed
 - Disposition of charges

The CAC database tracks demographic and case related data that is used to monitor program services, to provide cumulative data for annually reporting cooperation among participating agencies, to document the number of multidisciplinary investigatory interviews conducted as well as the number of case reviews conducted,

to provide collective data of the incidence of court involved child sexual and serious physical abuse cases and the disposition of such cases in Champaign County, to insure that all children served by the CAC have been referred for appropriate treatment services, to identify and document other pending or prior involvement, and to identify and document demographic changes and activity trends as they relate to child sexual and serious physical abuse in Champaign County.

The CAC also maintains a computerized linking log program which allows the parties to monitor compliance with this Protocol by linking cases interviewed at the CAC with reports submitted to the State's Attorney's Office for review. The Executive Director of the CAC is responsible for entering the following information into the linking log program:

- CAC Case Number
- Whether or not case originated at the CAC
- Case Status
 - Pending Investigation
 - Charged
 - No Complaint
 - Pending Review
 - Juvenile Petition
 - Not Submitted for SAO Review
- Originating Agency Case Number
- Criminal Case Number
- Juvenile Case Number
- Prior CAC Case Number
- Victim's Name
- Suspect's Name

To the extent permitted by law and in keeping with the CAC's commitment to protecting the confidentiality of the clients it serves, all multidisciplinary team members have access to case tracking information.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All multidisciplinary team members, including CAC staff and Governing Board members, within the bounds allowed by law and the rules and regulations of their respective agencies, agree to maintain the confidentiality of all records and information gathered on all cases investigated through the Children's Advocacy Center. All multidisciplinary team personnel further agree not to release any record or information on any CAC case except as it relates to the legitimate program operations of their agencies.

All members of the multidisciplinary team agree to respect the privacy of persons served by the Children's Advocacy Center and to hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service. The members of the multidisciplinary team further agree to maintain confidentiality when storing or disposing of client

records, and to maintain a professional attitude that upholds the confidentiality rights of individuals served, colleagues, applicants, and the CAC. Upon termination of employment, all multidisciplinary team members agree to maintain client and co-worker confidentiality, and to hold as confidential any information obtained concerning the CAC and its clients.

For the purpose of facilitating communication between the members of the multidisciplinary team and agencies/organizations to which clients of the CAC are referred for services, the CAC Case Manager requests that clients and/or their legal guardians sign appropriate consent forms. Clients and/or their legal guardians may refuse to execute consent forms.

The individual case files and any information obtained by the CAC are designated confidential. Any outside requests for information are referred to the appropriate DCFS investigator, law enforcement officer, or Assistant State's Attorney to process according to the existing policies of their respective agencies.

Requests to the CAC for information are referred to the Executive Director. All requests for release of information must be in the form of a written authorization to release information, which meets the following conditions:

- Addressed specifically to the CAC;
- States the specific information requested;
- States the purpose for which the information is intended;
- Signed and dated by the legal guardian and/or client, if applicable; and
- Received by the CAC no more than 90 days from the date of signature.

If subpoenas or requests by the court are received, legal counsel will be consulted prior to the release of any confidential information.

To ensure confidentiality of records and the integrity of the investigation, the CAC only maintains necessary identifying information on the child and the family. All official documentation is to be retained by investigative team members in compliance with Illinois statutes.

All CAC records are secured at all times to protect the clients' right to privacy and are maintained in a locked filing cabinet. Only authorized CAC staff members are issued a key to the locked filing cabinets.

CAC staff members are responsible for securing clients' files at all times when those files are in their possession. Staff members are not to leave files unattended in office or client areas, take files from the facility, or keep files outside of the locked filing cabinet overnight.

All client records are retained for a minimum of seven (7) years or until all litigation and/or adverse audit findings are resolved.

USE OF CAC FOR NON-CENTER CASES:

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center was established for the coordination of child sexual and serious physical abuse cases in Champaign County. However, interview rooms are available to any investigator who needs to interview child victims of other serious crimes and/or child witnesses to serious crimes. The investigator should contact the Executive Director to schedule an interview. The Executive Director also has discretion to allow use of the Center for interviews of children by investigators from other counties.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is prohibited in the facility at all times.

To the extent that those policies do not conflict with policies set by the CAC Governing Board, the Children's Advocacy Center complies with policies established by the Champaign County Board, including, but not limited to, Personnel, Equal Employment, Purchasing, Travel, Information Technology, Ethics in Government, and Drug and Alcohol Policies.

Children/adolescents being interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center are prohibited from possessing any type of electronic equipment, communications devices, or audio/video recording devices in the interview rooms, including, but not limited to: cell phones, pagers, cameras, tape recorders, DVD/Compact Disk players/recorders, i-Pods, and MP3 players.

EVALUATION OF THE PROTOCOL:

The Champaign County Children's Advocacy Center Governing Board reviews this Protocol at least once each year. The Board evaluates the effectiveness of the Protocol and considers any revisions deemed appropriate. The Board may also amend the Protocol at other times when deemed appropriate.

Any amended Protocol is filed with the local DCFS office for Champaign County and with DCFS in Springfield, Illinois. Amended Protocols are forwarded to each agency in the county that has responsibility for the investigation of child sexual abuse or serious physical abuse cases.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

From time to time, there may be disagreements among participating agencies or members of the multidisciplinary team concerning the handling of particular cases, which cannot be resolved in the normal course of case discussion and planning. Any such grievances should be directed in writing to the agency concerned or the agency employing the member(s) of the team concerned. If the agencies involved in the disagreement are unable to resolve the matter, they may request the assistance of the State's Attorney's Office in resolving their differences.

DISCLAIMER:

This Protocol is intended solely to be a set of guidelines to assist in creating, facilitating and maintaining mutual cooperation and teamwork among the participating agencies. It is not intended by any of the participating agencies to be a contract with any of the other participating agencies or any other persons or entities, nor to be the basis for the assumption of any legal obligation or liability. The Board members and participating agencies recognize that certain cases and situations may call for procedures or actions different than or contrary to the guidelines in this Protocol. The Board members and participating agencies agree that, when such situations arise, agencies will follow alternative courses of action or procedures that will facilitate the goals and objectives of this Protocol.

Any substantial deviation from the guidelines set forth in this Protocol should be documented and the reason(s) for the deviation explained.

- *Carle Clinic Child Protection Team*
- *Champaign County Mental Health Board*
- *Champaign County Probation & Court Services Department*
- *Champaign County Sheriff's Office*
- *Champaign County State's Attorney's Office*
- *Champaign Police Department*
- *Community Elements*
- *Illinois Department of Children & Family Services*
- *Illinois State Police*
- *Mahomet Police Department*
- *Rantoul Police Department*
- *Regional Superintendent of Schools*
- *University of Illinois Police Department*
- *Urbana Police Department*

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