

ABOUT US

The Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County provides a safe space where children can receive all the services they may need after disclosing sexual abuse. Police detectives, Children's Protective Service workers, medical personnel and counselors come together at the Center to interview, assess, and safeguard children from further abuse.

This coordinated, multidisciplinary approach eases the burden on the child and promotes accurate and fair decision making in criminal justice and child welfare systems.

All of the services of the Children's Advocacy Center are free of charge to all families.



CONTACT US

Children's Advocacy Center of
Kent County
cac-kent.org
2855 Michigan St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
P. 616.336.5160 F: 616.336.5193



children's
ADVOCACY CENTER
OF KENT COUNTY

Programs & Services

Leading the
effort against
child sexual
abuse.

FORENSIC INTERVIEWS

A forensic interview is conducted at the Children's Advocacy Center when there has been a report to law enforcement or Children's Protective Services that a child may have been a victim of sexual abuse.

Forensic interviews are intended to elicit detailed information about a possible event(s) a child may have experienced. Our interview process is developmentally sensitive, unbiased and truth-seeking to support fair and accurate decision-making in the criminal justice and child welfare systems.

THERAPY

Children between the ages of 3 and 18 who have experienced sexual abuse may be referred to the Center for therapy. We offer several types of therapy, including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), body safety, individual workshops, age-specific therapy groups and parent support groups.

All of our therapists have specialized trauma training and are experienced in utilizing evidence-based treatment approaches with children and adolescents. The goal of therapy is to provide a safe space for families to engage in their healing journeys through the guidance of client-centered, individualized treatment goals.

PROBLEMATIC SEXUALIZED BEHAVIORS (PSB)

Offered for children age 9 and under who have not disclosed sexual abuse but have exhibited problematic sexual behaviors. A trained specialist will meet with both the parent/caregiver and the child individually to gather information around the concerns, provide education around body safety and offer potential treatment recommendations.

FAMILY ADVOCACY

How well a child copes following the disclosure of sexual abuse has a lot to do with the support of the family. Our Family Advocate plays a key role in helping both child victims and their families in the aftermath of a crisis and/or trauma. The advocate can provide access to needed information, specialized services and support throughout the healing and justice processes.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Our Case Manager meets with parents one on one on an "as needed" basis to identify needs and work to overcome any barriers to meet those needs. The Case Manager can assist the parents with navigating local resources, as well as provide emotional support for the parents who may need to process with someone who understands the complexity and trauma of child sexual abuse.

KIDS HAVE RIGHTS

Kids Have Rights is a prevention program of the Children's Advocacy Center. Our program educates and empowers students, school staff, parents and caregivers to recognize, prevent, and stop child sexual abuse. The Kids Have Rights staff is composed of certified teachers with over 40 years of classroom experience between them.

Please contact Sara Soehnel, Kids Have Rights Program Manager, at ssoehnel@cac-kent.org for more information

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

National statistics tell us that approximately 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday, and as many as 90% of those children know their offender; it is someone the child knows, loves, and trusts. In Kent County, 99% of children that enter our doors know their offender.

Though these statistics are disheartening and overwhelming we know that with proper training and education, the adults in our community have the ability to make Kent County a safe place for the children we care for.

Please contact Misti DeVries, Community Advocate, at mdevries@cac-kent.org for more information.