

# Pinwheel Passages

The newsletter of the  
Children's Advocacy Center  
of the Bluegrass



Children's  
Advocacy  
Center  
of the Bluegrass

A healing place for  
sexually abused children  
and their families.



## ***A Note from our New Executive Director***

On December 1, 2015, I had the honor of being named the Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass. I'm very excited to step into this position. Since first coming to work at the CAC as the Development Director in April of 2014, I have gained a deep passion for helping the children we serve. The Children's Advocacy Center has an amazing staff who do incredible work, and I'm honored to be entrusted with this responsibility.

The Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass would not be able to offer our critical services without the generous support we receive from so many individuals, businesses, and foundations. Because of our donors, there is always a trained interviewer to speak to a frightened child. Because of our donors, an abused child is examined in our child-friendly medical clinic instead of a scary emergency room. Because of our donors, a child receives the restorative, healing therapy that helps him/her overcome the trauma of abuse. Because of our donors, worried parents have a team of caring, passionate advocates providing wrap-around support to their families.

The holiday season is a time of hope and a time to give thanks. This season we thank you for helping us provide hope to all the innocent children who have been the victims of abuse and turned to the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass.

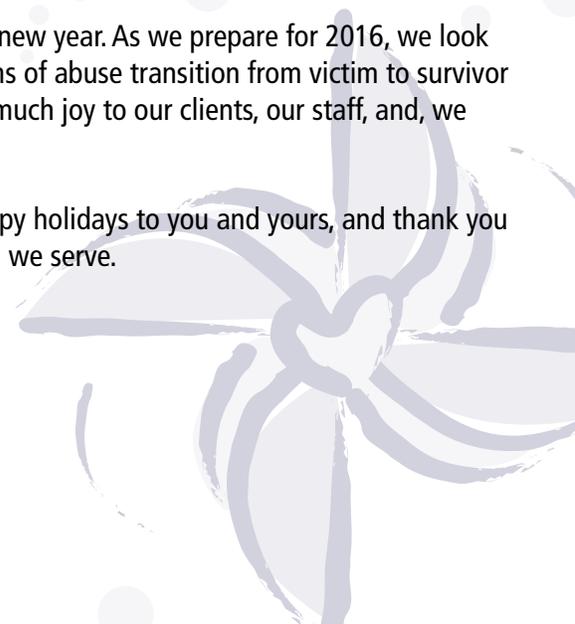
The holidays are also a time to look ahead to the new year. As we prepare for 2016, we look forward to the opportunity to help the child victims of abuse transition from victim to survivor to thrive. It is that transformation that brings so much joy to our clients, our staff, and, we hope, to our supporters.

On behalf of our clients, staff, and volunteers, happy holidays to you and yours, and thank you for making a difference in the lives of the children we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Winn Stephens".

Winn Stephens  
Executive Director



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# Uniquely Kentucky – An Evening for the Children’s Advocacy Center

Oh what a night!

On Friday, August 21, 340 people turned out for Uniquely Kentucky - An Evening For the Children’s Advocacy Center presented by Knight, Wahle & Chalothorn Orthodontists.

Guests enjoyed a delicious Kentucky Proud dinner, signature Kentucky cocktails including an Ale-8-One bourbon slushy, and music from alt-bluegrass group WestWend.

UK Hoops Coach Matthew Mitchell emceed the festivities and even offered his coach’s whistle up for auction.

All this fun led to some serious cash for the child victims of sexual abuse. More than \$100,000 was raised to support the programs and services of the Children’s Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass.

Thank you to our sponsors:

**Presenting Sponsor:** Knight, Wahle & Chalothorn Orthodontists

**Diamond Sponsor:** Quantrell Auto Group

**Platinum Sponsor:** Mitchell Family Foundation

**Gold Sponsors:** Columbia Gas of Kentucky, The Nerney Family Foundation, and UK Healthcare

**Silver Sponsors:** C&R Asphalt; Central Bank; Creative Kitchen and Bath; Frost Brown Todd; Joseph Hillenmeyer Garden Design; Lexington Furniture Company; McBrayer, McGinnis, Leslie and Kirkland; Padgett Construction; Performance Services; Republic Bank; Bruce and Cindi Simpson; and Rick Queen and Turf Town Properties



## Meet our Therapist – Jenna Sears

Jonna Sears is the CAC’s Child and Family Therapist. Since coming to the CAC in November 2014, Jonna has provided therapy services to more than 100 children and families. She is able to work with children who are experiencing a change in their daily functioning or mood as a result of the abuse. Jonna describes the start of the process: “I start by assessing each child and family to determine their needs and the work with them to create an individualized treatment plan that may help them achieve positive recovery and healing from the abuse they experienced.”

In addition to ongoing therapy services, Jonna also provides crisis counseling and mental health screens, and each spring and fall she conducts a girls’ therapeutic support group.

Jonna says, “People often ask me how I am able to cope with hearing stories about child sexual abuse every day. My response is that I have the rewarding job of hearing about individuals’ strengths, successes, and resiliency. I am inspired and strengthened by my job and the children and families I work with. There is nothing more successful to me than to remind a child of how brave they are or to hear a parent say they have their child back. Overall, providing a child survivor of sexual abuse with a safe place to process what happened to them can provide successes for that child throughout their life, and it is important to recognize that each child survivor deserves the opportunity to have someone support their healing.”



# 2015 In Review

Demand for our services continues to increase. In 2015, we broke all our previous service records. Being able to serve more children is the result of a lot of hard work by law enforcement, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, our amazing CAC staff, and our many wonderful supporters who provide the funding for our work.

In 2015 the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass:

- Conducted more than 650 developmentally-sensitive forensic interviews
- Provided 620 crisis counseling, support group, and case management services
- Conducted more than 160 medical examinations to diagnose and treat injuries, collect forensic evidence, and provide reassurance to every child and family
- Provided restorative, healing therapy to more than 90 children

All services are provided at no cost to a child's family. We are able to provide these critical services because of the generous support of our many donors. Thank you!

## Letting Kids be Kids

This year the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass received two new gifts for our clients.



On June 2, 2015 the CAC unveiled the new Junior League of Lexington Playground. The playground was made possible through a \$10,000 grant provided by the Junior League. The playground is utilized as a play therapy center by clients. Play therapy is typically used with children because it provides an environment for them to express their emotions and experiences in a natural, self-guided, and self-healing process. The outdoor setting is a happy, calm, and unthreatening atmosphere where children can be encouraged, challenged, and empowered. The playground is also very popular with clients waiting for medical exams or forensic interviews and children whose parents are attending support group. The Junior League of Lexington has a long history of supporting our community and we are so grateful for their gift.

Earlier this month members of the Bluegrass Miniature Society donated this beautiful doll house to the CAC. Our clients have loved playing house, moving the furniture, and inviting toys from other playsets over for a visit. Thank you to the Bluegrass Miniature Society for this wonderful gift.



## Thanks for Helping Keep the Monsters Out

Adam is our new front desk receptionist - our "Director of First Impressions" if you will. Earlier this year a very frightened girl came into our office for an interview. Our interviewer explained that this was a safe place and that Adam was at the desk to make sure nobody came inside who wasn't supposed to be here.

After her interview, the relieved girl ran up to Adam, gave him a big hug, and said, "Thanks for keeping the monsters out."

Children are often very relieved after their forensic interview because they have finally been able to unload the burden of their abuse. Telling their story is the first step on their road to overcoming the trauma of sexual abuse.

For more than 20 years, the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass has relied on the generous support of individuals like you to help us "keep the monsters out" and let children become the happy, healthy people they are meant to be.

Thank you!





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is a fully accredited member of  
the National Children's Alliance.*

## **Support the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass**

### **Make a Financial Contribution**

Each year, we help hundreds of children put this terrible ordeal behind them. Because all services are provided at NO COST to a child's family, we rely on the generosity of our friends and neighbors in Central Kentucky to help us fulfill our mission.

*There is no more direct way to help the Children's Advocacy Center than by making a financial contribution.* Your support makes it possible for us to provide hope and healing to the very children who need it most.

### **Other Ways to Give**

There are certain items at the center that are always in high demand. These include:

- Play dough - Play dough is an essential tool for our forensic interviewers. It helps us engage children during the forensic interview process.
- Gas cards/Grocery store cards - These are provided to families with limited resources or those in transition, often traveling great distances to come to the Center.
- Nutritious snacks and drinks - Children often spend 2-3 hours at the Center and may need a light snack or juice while they're here. This adds to the feeling that the Children's Advocacy Center is a safe, welcoming place.
- Sporting events tickets, unused gift cards, and art work - We can resell these items in silent auctions or other fundraisers held throughout the year.

***Thank you for caring about the CAC!!***

## **Mission of the Children's Advocacy Center**

To reduce the trauma experienced by child victims of sexual abuse by providing services in a nurturing, friendly and safe environment.