

Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center

Fall Winter Newsletter



During our fiscal year 2023-2024, the center staff have provided over 6866 services to include forensic interviews, specialized interviews, medical exams, victim advocacy, and counseling. Now looking ahead, Fall is in the air which means school is back in session and the holidays are just around the corner. Here at the Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center, we are starting to prepare for the upcoming holidays including our annual Christmas Party for the children and families we have served throughout the year. To be a part of the giving, follow the links to our Christmas wish lists on the last page of this newsletter.



Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center

300 S. Canal St. Leesburg, FL 34748

(352) 323-8303

www.cac4kids.org





Counseling Corner

Suggestions for emotional regulations



Let's face it. Emotions are a part of life. Mastering the regulation of these emotions can take decades of practice. How do we even learn about emotions and what to do with them? As caregivers increase their knowledge in helping themselves, they help children in their care learn to regulate emotions. It is extremely necessary for adults to practice and model positive regulation strategies. As children, we learn through observation. Here are a few key strategies to help children make positive choices and regulate their emotions:

- ♦ Model desired behaviors. Be an example for your children. They watch how you interact with people and how you handle difficult situations. For example, if saying "please" and "thank you" are important to you, do so to and around you children. "I see that we are both frustrated. Let's take a break to calm down and gather our thoughts. We can continue this discussion once we are able to listen to one another."



- ♦ Name your emotion. You increase your child's vocabulary of emotions by naming and labeling the emotions you are experiencing.

"I am feeling nervous that we will not get to school on time."

"I am feeling sad because I don't get to see my sister very much."



- ♦ Discuss your process for solving the experience. It is normal to have feelings. It is important to recognize and validate these out loud so that children learn emotions are valid and see ways to express and resolve strong emotional experiences. "I am feeling annoyed right now. I am going to step away to breath and calm down."

- ♦ Own your mistakes. Caregivers may find it difficult to talk about how a situation was poorly handled by them. However, talking with your child about the mistake and how it would have been better to handle the situation helps your child in two ways. It allows the child to learn the reality that no one is perfect, and everyone can evaluate situations to find better ways to solve the situation, problem, or conflict.

"I was frustrated when we were talking earlier and did not speak to you the way I should have."



For more information on Emotional Regulation the following articles may be helpful.

<https://heartmindonline.org/resources/regulation-is-connection-how-to-model-regulation-as-a-parent-or-caregiver>
www.apa.org/topics/parenting/emotion-regulation

Sources

<https://positivepsychology.com/emotion-regulation>

<https://www.growingmindsny.com/blog/modeling-emotion-regulation-for-ourselves-and-our-kids>



FAMILY ADVOCATE CORNER

Did you know...

That everyone is a mandated reporter in the state of Florida. Although there are two different types of mandated reporters.

The **General Reporter** is defined in Florida State Statute as any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is the victim of abuse, abandonment or neglect by parent, legal guardian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare.

The **Professional Reporter** is defined as anyone who is legally obligated to report known abuse and MUST identify themselves when reporting. This includes but is not limited to: Physician, medical examiner, chiropractic physician, nurse, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care, or treatment of persons, Health or mental health professional, Social worker, day care center worker, or other professional childcare, foster care, residential or institutional worker (child), Employees of Department of Business and Professional Regulation conducting inspections of public lodging establishments, Law enforcement officer, Judge, and Mediators.



How to Report Abuse
CALL THE ABUSE HOTLINE
(800) 962-2873
REPORT ONLINE
<https://reportabuse.myflfamilies.com>

For more detailed information please see chapter 39 of the Florida state statutes.



Be a hero. Spot the signs of abuse.

Learn these 10 signs of child abuse and make the report.
You may be the only one who will.

1. Unexplained injuries
2. Changes in behavior
3. Returning to earlier behaviors
4. Fear of going home
5. Changes in eating
6. Changes in sleeping
7. Changes in school performance and attendance
8. Lack of personal care or hygiene
9. Risk-taking behaviors
10. Inappropriate sexual behaviors

National Children's Alliance
The Force Behind Children's Advocacy Centers

Do something about it.
#ItsYourBusiness
nationalchildrensalliance.org/iyb

To Learn More About Child Abuse visit the National Children's Alliance Website
www.nationalchildrensalliance.org

Child Protection Team News

The Child Protection Team

- Medical Director - Oludapo Soremi
- Team Coordinator - Regina Berry
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Supervisor - Heather Palasky
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse - Holly Bonyng
- Senior Case Coordinator - Cori Sholl
- Case Coordinator - Logan Kovacic
- Case Coordinator - Megan Sweat
- Case Coordinator - Awilda Echevarria
- Data Entry Specialist - Jessica Priebe
- Receptionist/CPT Victim Advocate - Angela Wood

Who Are We...

As the experts in child abuse and neglect assessments, CPT performs our vital services through specialized interviews (with caregivers and or extremely younger children), forensic interviews and medical examinations. Our case coordinators and medical team assist our community partners in determining abuse or neglect and if a child is safe in their environment. We also make service recommendations for family changes to help improve family functioning and overall child safety.

Our main office is in downtown Leesburg. We offer satellite services in Sumter County, Clermont, and Tavares. These satellite offices allow families to be served closer to their home with a familiar community environment, alleviating inordinate transportation costs which can add up.

Community Awareness Trainings



To promote community visibility and increase the public's awareness of child abuse and its proper reporting procedures, CPT recently provided off-site trainings to:

- Lake County Department of Children and Families (DCF) Lake
- County Sheriff's Office Special Victims Unit
- Lake County Public Safety new recruiting class



Look for us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/cac4kidsfl>



child protection team
Children's Medical Services

Center Happenings



2nd Annual Caring for Kids Ride
Sponsored by the "Punishers" to benefit
the Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center

The Punishers Motorcycle Club is a non-profit organization of over 200 motorcycle riders registered to ride to prevent child abuse. We hosted an informational table. Along with the proceeds from the event, the Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center received donations of clothing, gift cards, and a plaque to display in our lobby.



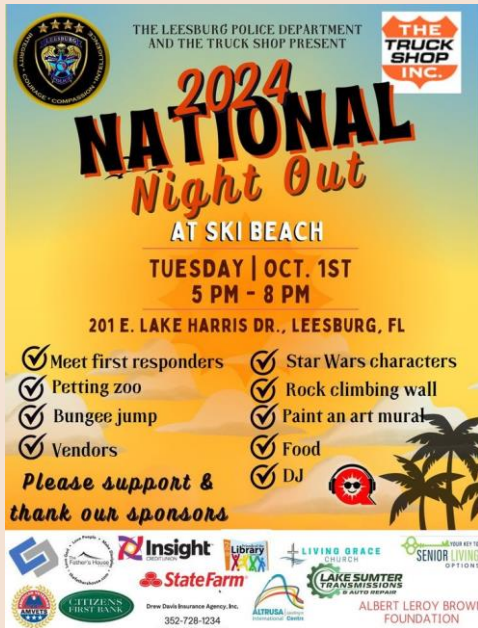
99th Howey in the Hills Founder's Day
Sponsored by Howey Mansion

We hosted an informational table and provided education about our services and safety through conversation, handouts, bracelets, pins, and brochures.



We can't change what happened, but we can change what happens next!

Upcoming Center Happenings



October 1st, 2024 - 5pm to 8pm
National Night Out 2024
Ski Beach

201 E. Lake Harris Dr. Leesburg FL

Stop by for fun give-a-ways and information about our Center's services!

October 5th, 2024 - 9am to 12pm

The Great Scarecrow Build-Off and Expo

Located at Courthouse Square - Downtown Leesburg



Our staff plans to build a scarecrow in support of the Lake Sumter Children's Advocacy Center. The scarecrows will be displayed on Main Street during the month of October.



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Upcoming Center Happenings

October 19th, 2024 - 8am to 12pm

Lake County's Walk for Freedom

Lake Sumter State College Campus
9501 US 441, Leesburg FL. 34788

Event Registration: <https://www.a21.org/register>

The event is sponsored by A21 and the Father's House Church Sisterhood Ministry.

We will walk in solidarity against human trafficking and host an informational table to answer questions and discuss our services.

Our Center hosts multidisciplinary team staffings in collaboration with our community partners to strategize plans for children who are recovered, deemed at risk, or currently a victim of human trafficking.



The holiday season is approaching quietly, just like a ninja, and guess what? Our wishlists have received a modern twist with the addition of QR codes!



If you are interested in supporting our families this holiday season, please see our wishlists at Amazon & Target by using the QR codes. Open your camera on your device and it will link you to the wishlist.



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