**Four-year-old child brought to the CAC of Southeastern Indiana after allegation of abuse by Jefferson County daycare operator**

***Child Advocacy Center interviews six more after initial forensic interview***

MADISON, IND – On Tuesday, January 20, 2017, a four-year-old child made a disclosure to an adult that a daycare operator in Madison had inappropriately touched them. The child was taken by Jefferson County Sheriff’s Deputies to the Children’s Advocacy Center of Southeastern Indiana. There, a multidisciplinary team of forensic interviewers began a neutral forensic interview of the child. “This is a process we do every day across our eight-county coverage area,” said Sarah Brichto, the Executive Director of the CAC of Southeastern Indiana.

Brichto added, “That initial interview has led law enforcement to bring six more children to be interviewed by us since then. Three of the children attended the daycare and three are foster children to the adult. The Indiana Department of Child Services has removed the foster children from the home as standard procedure while they and law enforcement investigate the allegation.”

The CAC of Southeastern Indiana is providing the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department, the City of Madison Police Department, and the Jefferson County Prosecutor’s Office a recording of the forensic interviews. The CAC of Southeastern Indiana does not provide legal services.

Child Advocacy Centers provide neutral, child-first forensic interviews between a child and single forensic interviewer. The child’s responses to neutral fact-finding questions are recorded on to a DVD which is given to law enforcement after the interview. Executive Director Brichto reiterated, “The parents, prosecution, other attorneys, and law enforcement officers are never in the room during the interview. It’s our job to interview the child then connect and assist them and non-offending family members with security, justice, and healing.”

The CAC of Southeastern Indiana covers Dearborn, Decatur, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley, and Switzerland Counties and has been in operation since June 2005. Since then the CAC of Southeastern Indiana has conducted 2,500 forensic interviews. 450 of those cases were in 2016.

Indiana’s Mandated Reporter law requires everyone, regardless of age, to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child to their local police department, Sheriff’s office, Indiana State Police, or to the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-800-5556. To learn more about Indiana’s Mandated Reporter law, visit the Indiana Chapter of the National Children’s Alliance at <http://incacs.org/mandatedreporter/>.

If you suspect your child or a child you know may have been impacted by this allegation or another suspected case of abuse, assure the child they will be made safe. Do not pressure or try to encourage the child to talk about an allegation if they’re not ready or feel unsafe. By Indiana law you must contact your local police or the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline immediately at 1-800-800-5556.

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