

OUR TEAM

The Child Advocacy Center believes that the best way to investigate allegations of abuse or cases involving children is to use a team approach. Here is a list of our team members and their roles:

Forensic Child Interviewer

A specially trained interviewer who conducts a non-leading interview allowing the child to feel comfortable while talking. More than 1,100 children are interviewed each year at our center by our interviewers.

Family Advocate

Provides support and resource referrals for the families while visiting the Child Advocacy Center and throughout the process as needed.

Detective

A law enforcement officer who works with the team to gather information for a possible criminal investigation.

Department of Child Services (DCS)

A case worker will meet with the family to talk more in-depth about what was discussed during the interview as well as what future steps need to be taken for the safety of the child.

Prosecutor

If a case is criminally investigated it will be reviewed by the prosecutor's office. If charges are filed, the charges will be sent to court. The prosecutor is an attorney whose role is to seek justice on each criminal case and to make sure the victims' rights are protected.

Medical Professionals

May be called upon to determine if a child has been injured and treat those injuries as needed, or explain the reason for absence of injury.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact the Marion County Child Advocacy Center:

Phone: (317) 327-6900

Email: MCPO@indy.gov

4134 N. Keystone Ave., Door 3
Indianapolis, IN 46205



Other services provided by the Marion County Prosecutor's Office:

Child Support Services: For assistance in the establishment, enforcement and modification of court ordered child support, please call **(317) 327-1800**.

Adult Protective Services Hotline: Report suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation of endangered adults to **(877) 284-0063**.

Marion County Child Advocacy Center



Our Mission

The Marion County Child Advocacy Center aims to provide a neutral and compassionate child-friendly environment where the Multidisciplinary Team investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect while providing support and advocacy for children and their families.



Provided by

The Marion County Prosecutor's Office
Ryan Meats, Prosecutor

ABOUT THE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

In Marion County, if a child has been victimized or is a witness to a violent crime he or she may be interviewed at the Marion County Child Advocacy Center.

The Child Advocacy Center is a child-focused center dedicated to providing children a safe and comfortable place where highly trained child interviewers talk to children in private, child-friendly interview rooms.



Marion County Child Advocacy Center's child-friendly lobby.

FORENSIC INTERVIEW PROCESS

Before the interview:

The forensic child interviewer will first meet the child and any family members to introduce him or herself and provide a comfortable environment before starting the interview.



A child interview room at the Center.

During the interview:

The child is asked nonleading and age-appropriate questions. The purpose is to get a better understanding of any incidents of abuse that may have taken place or determine what the child has witnessed. A child can stop the interview or leave the interview room at any time. The interview length will vary depending on the age of the child and if the child is willing to talk or not. Interviews average 5 minutes for each year of age.

Members of the team are able to observe and listen to the interviews from a separate room. This prevents the child from having to share their experience an additional time or with multiple individuals. Doing so helps to minimize the risk of additional trauma for the child.

HELPFUL TIPS

- If your child wants to talk about what happened, the most helpful thing you can do is to be a good listener and allow the child to talk. Avoid asking too many questions, and leave that for the trained professionals.
- Do not coach, influence, or rehearse with your child before coming to the Child Advocacy Center. It could affect the outcome of the case.
- Please let us know if your child has any special needs or challenges that may affect the interview.

Everyone in Indiana is a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse and neglect

**24/7 DCS Hotline:
(800) 800-5556**

- If you have any questions call your DCS case worker or speak to a family advocate at the Child Advocacy Center. DCS main line: (317) 968-4300.
- If your child was not ready to disclose or talk, let us know if in the future he or she becomes ready.
- We always suggest counseling for every child who has been through any type of abuse. Please ask for referrals at the Child Advocacy Center.
- If you have any concerns that a child is being abused or neglected please call the Child Abuse Hotline at (800) 800-5556.