



# A RAY OF HOPE. A VOICE FOR CHILDREN.

November 2020

## What's new:

- Check out our Chance Chats on FaceBook
- We have a new Instagram Account: CAPC\_catawbacounty
- We have a brand new YouTube Channel

[www.catawbacountycapc.org](http://www.catawbacountycapc.org)

## Save the Date:

- April 24, 2021  
**DENIM and DIAMONDS**  
at Market on Main in  
Downtown Hickory



## From the Director

It's so hard to remember life before the pandemic. The CAPC Board of Directors began a search and identified a facilitator to work with our committee to develop a strategic plan for the next 3 years. We held our third annual Camp Dragonfly for girls ages 12-17. As you can see from our numbers, we were well on our way to providing services to more children and families this fiscal year than we did the previous year. Then COVID-19 hit and everything shut down. Our numbers decreased drastically in March, April, May, and June.

At the end of our fiscal year, we served 26% less children and their families that we did last year at the same time.

Reports of child abuse were down across the nation. Our local paper even ran an article titled: *National Experts See No Proof of Child Abuse Surge Amid the Pandemic*. Those of us who serve in this field knew what this pandemic would mean for vulnerable children. Children out of school and isolated from caring adults is a perfect storm for abuse.

- **We know that 90% of abuse happens by someone the child knows.**

(Continued on page 4)

## Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in Review

**256** Children were interviewed at the CAC

**Impact:** Decreased trauma associated with the investigative process

**90** Children received on-site medical exams

**Impact:** Child friendly environment reduces anxiety associated with a medical examination

**522** Hours of on-site mental health assessments and treatment

**Impact:** Address and reduce any negative effects on behavior and development

**1,506** hours of Victim Advocate services

**Impact:** Educate and guide families to needed information, services, and support

**16** Members of the MDT attended State and National professional training

**Impact:** Team members stay current on trends, best practice methods, and research

**306** Adults trained in Darkness to Light— **Total TD 7,761**

**Impact:** Positive changes in adults' child-protective behaviors over the long-term

**653** Children trained in Yello Dyno Safety method— **Total TD 5,154**

**Impact:** Children learn safety rules and what to do if rules are broken

**436.75** Volunteer hours

**Impact:** Ambassadors for our mission and connection to our community

## Thanks to our 2019-2020 donors and volunteers!

### Grantors and Foundations

Bolick Foundation  
Catawba County United Way  
Children's Advocacy Centers of NC, Inc.  
Corinth Reformed Church  
FTB Advisors  
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## Thanks to our 2019-2020 donors and volunteers!

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*Thank  
you!*

## NCA Accreditation

Every 5 years the Children's Advocacy and Protection Center applies for accreditation through the National Children's Alliance (NCA). NCA is the accrediting body for Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs). NCA ensures that all children served by CACs across the US receive consistent, evidence-based services that help them heal from abuse.

Accreditation is a rigorous process to ensure that CAC's meet Ten Standards to become accredited. During July—August 2019 we worked on our application for accreditation. We submitted our application in September 2019 and then hosted a site visit in February 2020. After the site visit we



received notification that we met all of the standards. A recommendation was submitted from our site reviewers to the NCA Board of Directors that the Children's Advocacy and Protection Center be granted full accreditation. The recommendation was approved by the NCA Board of Directors in June 2020.

## From the Director (continued...from page 1)

- **Nearly all abuse happens in the home.**
- **More than 2/3 of the nation's child abuse reports come from teachers, law enforcement, social services, and medical and mental health professionals.**

As the restrictions were lifted our numbers in Catawba County began to increase dramatically, as we expected. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, the dramatic economic slowdown threatened the resources we needed to serve kids. All fundraising events were suspended, beginning in March due to COVID-19.

April is the month when the CAPC focuses on prevention and building awareness of the CAC in our community. April is also the month when we host our annual Denim and Diamonds fundraiser. The CAPC raises almost half of our fiscal year donations during the 3rd and 4th quarter of our fiscal year. What was happening around us was enough to make one lose hope. But we have never been about losing hope; on the contrary, we are all about HOPE!

The CAPC is an integral part of our community's child abuse response system. Our doors never closed. No phone call was left unanswered. We never said we can't do this; but instead, what do we need to provide the services and keep everyone safe? We made immediate and drastic changes in operations and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of staff, MDT, and clients during a pandemic while continuing to ensure access to services. Our community responded to requests that we needed during this time in such a heartfelt and generous way. Board members and past Board members came forward and helped secure essential funding.

Our **RAY of HOPE** is found in each one of you and the support from our Board of Directors. Thank you all so much for joining with us in our work as we face the challenges and explore the opportunities during these extraordinary times.

***You have blessed us by sharing your time, talent, and treasure!***

*~ Adrienne Opdyke, Executive Director*



## Is it Over Yet?

Have you noticed you are more anxious, irritable, sad or stressed lately? Do you miss the way life used to be? Are your typical self-care strategies unavailable due to restrictions? Is there some hopelessness setting in about when it will end? If you said yes to any of these, welcome to what I am calling "COVID-fatigue." This pandemic has altered everything we are used to. It has wrecked our routines and changed how we interact in all areas of life, while also raising concern about the health and well-being of our families and ourselves.

Now imagine you are a child. Children thrive with routine, structure, and consistency. There is comfort in knowing what to expect, to sticking to a schedule, and knowing the rules. However, COVID has taken all of that away. School looks very different. Learning is, at least in some part, on their own, raising all kinds of challenges with focus, capabilities, and engagement. Social interactions are extremely limited and for some children non-existent at this point. Routines are no more and "normal" is nowhere to be found. All of these changes, in addition to their own worries about the virus and/or awareness of increased stress in their parents/caregivers have left many children feeling overwhelmed. And on top of all of that, they have often lost their primary coping mechanism and supports - time with friends, a caring teacher, a connection outside of the home. Loneliness, confusion, sadness, anxiety, helplessness and hopelessness grow. This lack of sense of control over all the changes and over what happens next, we are all left with increased stress and potential changes to our mood, thoughts, and behavior.

What can we do...for ourselves and our children? Establish daily routines, focus on what can be controlled, maintain hobbies and activities that help us feel confident and successful, practice relaxation skills, seek distractions (books, music, exercise), limit exposure to news coverage, stay connected to others (phone, text, video chat, etc.). Also, take one day at a time, replace negative thoughts with positive ones and practice mindfulness or meditation. Journal, draw, focus on gratitude. Be a connection for a child...ask them how they are feeling, how they are managing. Listen to them, validate their feelings (we are all feeling much of the same), answer questions as you can and acknowledge what can't be answered. Remind them they are not alone and help them practice the above coping tools. We will get through this pandemic...together.

For additional information, please see:

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/understanding-and-coping-with-reactions-in-a-pandemic>

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/helping-children-cope-with-the-COVID-19-pandemic>

~ Karen Henson, Mental Health Therapist

### Chance's Corner



"Chance is the best stress-taker ever; He takes all of my stress away!"

Good day  
doodles



Denim & Diamonds

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# Save the Date

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April 24, 2021 • Market on Main



**Children's Advocacy Center**  
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Conover, North Carolina 28613

**Phone: (828) 465-9296**  
**[www.catawbacountycapc.org](http://www.catawbacountycapc.org)**

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