



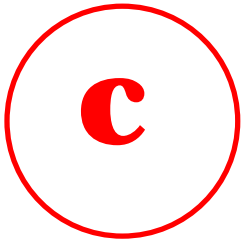
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Child Abuse Network News

*Stop the hurt...
begin the healing*

Child Crisis Unit

By Jaime Vogt



This is the third in a series of articles written about the multidisciplinary team at the JUSTICE Center. As I have discussed in the past articles, the multidisciplinary team is the product of several agencies that work together to investigate allegations of child abuse. These agencies are the Child Abuse Network, Department of Human Services Child Welfare, University of Oklahoma Medical Team, District Attorney's Office, and the Tulsa Police Department's Child Crisis Unit. All of these agencies have different responsibilities, but collaborate in an effort to stop child abuse. In many ways it is amazing that these groups, with such different personalities, are able to work together at all. But somehow they do, starting with joint investigations. Imagine a fast-paced, tough-talking police detective taking the time to coordinate an investigation with a cautious, tenderhearted social worker. Does this take more time? Usually. Does this frustrate both police and child welfare? Sometimes. Is this a better way to do an investigation? Absolutely. In addition to producing a more thorough and comprehensive investigation, this benefits the child. Children who are part of an investigation have often been required to talk to numerous adults (teachers, counselors, police, child welfare, doctors, friends and family), and go to several places (police stations, Department of Human Services offices, physician's office, and hospitals). In a joint investigation, one investigator or a forensic interviewer can conduct the child interviews, while the other investigators can watch from another room. The JUSTICE Center also provides the ability to videotape the child interviews so that others on the multidisciplinary team can watch later, if needed, without re-interviewing the child. In addition to their training as police officers, the detectives in the Child Crisis Unit bring with them unique skills but a common goal. "To work for the kids, for they are the true victims." This goal is so dominant in their work ethic that they commit themselves to the multidisciplinary approach of child abuse investigations. Anyone who knows a police officer can easily identify an independent, focused and persistent demeanor. These same characteristics have to be channeled in a way that fits with not only their fellow officers, but also team members from the other disciplines.

It takes respect and frequent compromise to conduct these joint investigations. Not all officers would be patient with this process. There are several hurdles to this type of work. There are requirements from different agencies to comply with, the caseloads are heavy, the investigations are very involved and manpower and resources are limited. Often, because the investigation of child abuse can be so difficult and time-consuming, it is not uncommon to have a high rate of burnout. The detectives say that they do a variety of things to fight "burnout". One is to attend additional training that offers new investigation information and motivation. Another is to provide training to others that reminds them of the vast amount of expertise each of these detectives possess. Additionally, they all work at staying in shape and balancing family and "down time" to resist becoming overwhelmed. There are also the stories that remind them of why they continue to do this kind of work:

- There was the time a detective had to remove a group of 5 siblings from their home and take them to the shelter. Expecting the children to be sad that they were leaving, the detective was struck by the children's excitement to simply see food and toys.
- There was another time a detective picked up small children who had been living in a home that was used as a meth lab. Later the cleanup crew went in to collect evidence, but they were covered from head to toe in protective gear.
- A detective took a starving child out of a home and to the hospital. The doctor told the detective that the child was probably hours away from dying.

The Tulsa Police Department has a website that outlines its vision for their profession. Their goal is to be "recognized as the national benchmark in innovative and professional policing through the following characteristics:

- Uncompromising Integrity
- Demonstrated Excellence
- Exceptional Personnel
- Public Trust Through "Partnerships"

For those of us working at the Justice Center with the Child Crisis Unit, we know the "vision" has been achieved.

Special Events:

- ▼ **CAN Film Festival**
 - ▲ Sunday, Nov. 2, 2003
 - ▲ IMAX Theaters



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Barbara E. Findeiss

**From the Desk of
 The Executive Director**

By: Barbara Findeiss

The story on the front page of this newsletter provides insight as to what it means to be a child abuse investigator. Nothing can fully capture the unthinkable that these investigators see everyday. My respect and gratitude for these heroes increases daily.

We at CAN try to do our part in making their job a little more bearable...things such as providing a child friendly environment for "their" children, assuring readily accessible medical evaluations and expertise, offering a specially trained child interview specialist, and providing a mental health specialist so that they know that children and families have a place to begin the healing process. Finally and more importantly, CAN supports an environment that focuses on a team approach to child abuse investigations. Obviously, these all appear to be the right thing to do, but in the end do we make a difference?

In their first year at the JUSTICE Center, the Child Crisis Unit of the Tulsa Police Department experienced a 74% increase in the number of cases cleared by arrest. In addition, a confession was obtained in approximately 73% of the Unit's cases. Several factors probably contributed to this success, however the Sergeant offered his own perspective "...the move to the Justice Center and the multidisciplinary team approach to investigating abuse cases is probably the primary reason".

I agree with the Sergeant, we do make a difference.

2003 CAN Services Statistics

April through June

420 new children were served at CAN

Ages of these children were:

- 0-6 years 248
- 7-12 years 123
- 13-18 years 36
- Unknown 0

These children were seen for:

- Sexual Abuse 230
- Physical Abuse 158
- Neglect 29
- Witness to Violence 1
- Other 12

Heartfelt "thanks" to the following individuals and organizations for their contributions:

April 1, 2003 – June 30, 2003

- Katie Abercrombie
- Accurate Fire Equipment
- David Adams
- Adams Mark Hotel
- Advanced Imaging
- James Allen
- Wayne Allen
- Tiffany Arend
- Aspen Medical Imaging
- Keith Bailey
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Video Conferencing Equipment

Donated with love; in memory of Michelle Shelton Newman by friends and family; to the Child Abuse Network.

The videoconference equipment is such an exciting addition to our education and training programs. We currently have one medical peer review conference scheduled per month with availability for many opportunities that the members of our multidisciplinary team can use to enhance their knowledge.



Pictured Left to Right family of Michelle: Roxanne & Kyle Whiteis (Sister and Brother In-Law); Dianne and Rex Shelton (Parents)

Special "Thanks"

IREM (Institute for Real Estate Management) Fashion Show

First time event, which is expected to raise over \$4,000.00.



Many "Thanks" to Robyn Brooks and Becky Weaver for bringing this exciting fundraiser to CAN.

Sutures 8th Annual Golf Tournament

Suture's Golf Tournament is expected to raise over \$19,000.00. Thanks for your outstanding efforts!



Dan Pollard - co-owner of Suture's, Larry Fleming – owner of LDF Companies of Tulsa, Barbara Findeiss - Executive Director of CAN, Kerry Tunnel – co-owner of Suture's and Dave Ingram co-owner of Suture's.

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begin the healing*

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**CAN is Tulsa's
Children's
Advocacy Center**

*CAN is a Charter
Member of The
National Children's
Alliance*



- What:** A fund-raiser to benefit the Child Abuse Network held in partnership with Cinemark IMAX® Theatre.
- When:** Sunday, November 2, 2003
1pm – 2:15pm – 3:30pm – 4:45pm
(Four separate events – film 30minutes following event start)
- Where:** Cinemark IMAX® Theatres – 71st & Hwy 169
10802 East 71st Street, Tulsa, OK
- How:** CAN will sell corporate packages and individual tickets at a cost of \$35 per person. Plan to come early to enjoy the delicious food and treats compliments of The Doubletree Hotels and Southern Hills Hotel prior to the show, experience “Fun Fest” festivities for children of all ages. Conclude your afternoon at one of four showings of IMAX’s family holiday film “Santa vs. the Snowman” in 3D. It is sure to be a great adventure for everyone. Be a star for CAN and Tulsa’s children. Reserve your tickets now for the CAN Film Festival.