

Keeping KIDS FIRST WINTER 2007



CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY
SERVICES
of GREATER
ST. LOUIS

CONTACT Us

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Central West End
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www.stlouiscac.org

EXPANDING OUR SERVICES

Since 1995, the Children's Advocacy Center of St. Louis located at 4443 West Pine Boulevard in the Central West End has served as the agency location where forensic interviews were conducted to assist area law enforcement and child protection workers in their child abuse and neglect investigations. Child friendly SAFECARE medical examinations are also performed at the West Pine site. Forensic operations remain in high demand and will continue to be headquartered at our West Pine site.



In 2005, the agency decided to expand our interview and treatment protocols to include not only victims of childhood sexual abuse but also children affected by other types of trauma such as of physical abuse, domestic violence, community violence, traumatic bereavement and accidents. While the majority of our cases continue to involve childhood sexual abuse, offering services for victims of other childhood traumas has significantly increased the demand for our treatment services.

This increased demand for our trauma informed counseling services provided an opportunity for the agency to expand its clinical operations to the West Pine site. Currently, five part time therapists share space with the full time forensic staff and provide a variety of individual, family and group counseling sessions during afternoons, evenings and Saturdays. Utilizing counseling space in both the West Pine and Weinman buildings opens up convenient options for the families who need us.



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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back at 2007, we at Children's Advocacy Services have a great deal for which to be grateful. This year end issue of our newsletter and the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2006-07 outlines this year's highlights and there are many! For the second year in a row, the agency has significantly increased our capacity to serve the children of St. Louis who have experienced abuse or trauma. We have been fortunate to add and fill a number of important staff positions. Our West Pine site, longtime home of our forensic interviewing operations, now also hosts individual and group counseling sessions. Recently, we successfully launched our updated website, www.stlouiscac.org. Finally, we kicked off 2007 Blue Ribbon activities to commemorate Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month with our first Keep Kids Safe and Families Strong Walk in Forest Park in April.



Even with these important accomplishments, we are ever mindful that there is always more work we need to do. Although we have increased the number of sessions in which children were served by over 25% each of the last two years, the demand for trauma informed interviewing and counseling remains high while revenues to support these vital services have not increased. Consequently, we must rely on the generosity of donors to help us bridge the gap of service costs. Please remember the children and families served by Children's Advocacy Services and make a contribution to our year end appeal with the enclosed envelope or visit our website www.stlouiscac.org for details. Contributions of \$100 or more are eligible for Missouri's Children in Crisis Tax Credit.

On behalf of the kids- Thank You!

Jerry H Dunn, Ph.D.

Executive Director

**We are finally in a place
of peace and getting our
lives back in order, she is
progressing nicely..**

- CASGSL parent



CHILDREN IN CRISIS TAX CREDITS

What if Children’s Advocacy Services could show you how a donation to the Center will not only help us fulfill our mission but also provide Tax Relief for you? This scenario is a reality thanks to the Children in Crisis Tax Credit program approved last year by the Missouri Legislature.



As an authorized Child in Crisis (CIC) agency, Children’s Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis provides qualified donors with the documentation necessary to apply for this new tax credit program. Individual and Business Donors applying for the Children in Crisis (CIC) tax credits are eligible for up to a maximum 50% tax credit.

Here is an example of how your donation to CASGSL will help us serve more children and may provide tax relief for you too. The example is based on a 28% federal tax bracket.

For a \$1,000 cash gift to CASGSL using tax credits:	\$1000.00
Missouri Tax Credit (50% of gift)	- \$500.00
Federal Income Tax Deduction (28%)	- \$280.00
State Income Tax Deduction (6%)	- \$ 60.00
Federal Tax on State Savings	+\$140.00
Net Cost to You	\$300.00

CASGSL advises you to consult your tax advisor to see how you personally can benefit from this program but here is the simple process for applying for the CIC tax credits:

- Make a minimum gift of \$100.00 to Children’s Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis indicating you would like to receive tax credits.
- You will receive an acknowledgement letter and a tax credit application form with instructions

Please note the following:

- The minimum allowable cash contribution is \$100.00.
- Qualified donations include checks or credit cards.
- The donor must submit the tax credit application form within twelve months from the date of the contribution.
- Tax credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Tax credits may be applied to the tax year in which the donation was made or any portion of the tax credit not claimed may be carried over the next five succeeding tax years.
- CIC tax credits are not sellable or transferable

**Information courtesy of The Child Center, Inc.*

For more information or to reserve tax credits, please contact Judy Cates, Administrative Assistant at (314) 516-6798 or catesj@umsl.edu



BOARD MEMBER APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

Children’s Advocacy Services is currently reviewing applications to identify five additional individuals interested in serving the agency as a member of the Development Advisory Board. Because the University manages the fiscal, personnel and governance responsibilities for the agency, CASGSL Board members concentrate all their energy toward efforts which directly improve and expand the services we provide to children and families impacted by childhood trauma. Board members plan and implement fundraising events and serve as informational ambassadors to the community about CASGSL’s mission and services. Board membership requires an annual Leadership Gift, attendance at Board

meetings and committee service. Board members are acknowledged on agency communications, at special events and through letters of service to their employers. This is a great opportunity for professionals and community members to get involved in a meaningful way and help kids in our community. For more information about Board membership requirements and the application process please contact Executive Director, Jerry Dunn at 314 516 6798 or dunnjer@umsl.edu



SAFECO SPONSORS A FALL FESTIVAL



Children and adults alike gathered on the Friday before Halloween to celebrate at CASGSL’s Weiman Center. Once again, Safeco did a wonderful job of providing the children with an evening of fun filled with games, activities and lots of pizza. They transformed the center into a land of pumpkins, witches and happy ghosts

and craft making. A carnival of games such as bowling, bobbing for apples, a pumpkin toss, and a pumpkin walk were also set up for the children to enjoy. While this party is for the children, the



parents and CASGSL staff seemed to enjoy themselves just as much as the little ones did. It is always heart warming to see a helping hand extended to our children here at Children’s Advocacy Services. Much gratitude goes to Safeco and their employees for putting on this festival for the children again this year.

and provided each of the children with their own bag of candy for attending.

Around 65 parents and children came dressed in costumes ranging from brides to bums, and penguins to vampires. Safeco has always been so generous with this celebration by providing the children with face painting

“ It was great to get to see these kids be kids. ”
– CASGSL Staff Member



“I honestly don't think without your intervention that we would be where we are at in our lives at this moment.

– CASGSL parent

2ND ANNUAL KEEP KIDS SAFE AND FAMILIES STRONG WALK

CASGSL is sponsoring their annual walk during April's Blue Ribbon month activities to promote awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect. The date for this year's Walk is Saturday, April 12th, 2008. The event will be held in Forest Park again this year, with the opening remarks starting at 10 a.m. To accommodate those who wish to stretch their legs a little further, this year's festivities will include a 5k Run in addition to the mile long Family Walk. Proceeds from the event will help CASGSL better serve the youngest victims of child abuse, neglect and trauma.

Registration for the walk can be completed by calling and requesting information, filling out a form on a brochure, or through the CASGSL website [www](http://www.stlouiscac.org).



[stlouiscac.org](http://www.stlouiscac.org). The

CASGSL website has a new feature that makes registration simple and

collecting donations even easier. On the home page there is a Gift Tools thermometer that serves as a progress tracker for the walk, as well as an icon that will lead participants to a site where they are able to begin registration. Through Gift Tools each participant has the ability to create their own team for the walk, join an existing team or register as an individual participant. Participants who use this feature will be able to use the web as a convenient tool for contacting potential sponsors and for collecting their donations.

Like most fundraising events, CASGSL's walk is made possible through the generosity of corporations who sponsor this event. Many thanks go out to all those companies who donate the supplies and money that make this much needed event a possibility and to the employees of those companies who participate in the event and support the work that CASGSL does for the community.





SPOTLIGHT TREATMENT: PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY (PCIT)

Jennifer learned about CASGSL's Parent-Child Interaction Therapy program from her son's preschool teacher. When she called to make an appointment, she was at the end of her rope. At age four, Tyler's behavior problems had escalated to the point that the family's landlord was threatening eviction due to neighbors' complaints about the boy's loud tantrums at all hours of the day and night. Tyler had been expelled from two preschool programs, and was wearing out his welcome at his current school. His oppositional behavior created a huge amount of stress in the family, and Jennifer and her husband didn't know where to turn.

Six months later, Jennifer is amazed at the change in her son. He is calmer, behaves well at home and school, follows directions easily, and has many fewer tantrums. Tyler seems much happier, and his relationships with both parents have drastically improved. "The difference in our household is like night and day. Everyone feels more at peace. I don't have to yell anymore," Jennifer said. "I'm telling everyone that PCIT saved our family." Tyler's teachers are just as pleased; they recently named Tyler as "Student of the Month."

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is a research-supported treatment for children experiencing behavior problems. The model places emphasis on improving the parent-child relationship and changing parent-child interaction patterns. In PCIT, therapists teach parents specific skills to establish a nurturing and secure relationship with their child while increasing their child's positive behavior and decreasing negative behavior. This treatment has two distinct phases: Child Directed Interaction (CDI) resembles play therapy in that parents engage their child in play with the goal of strengthening the parent-child relationship; Parent Directed Interaction (PDI) is similar to clinical behavior therapy in that parents learn to use specific behavior management techniques. Treatment ends when the parent-child relationship is positive and secure, parents have successfully mastered behavior modification skills, and the child's behaviors are within an acceptable range. PCIT is both short-term (treatment generally lasts around six months) and highly effective; more than 100

well-designed research studies have demonstrated its high degree of efficacy.



Parents and children alike enjoy their weekly PCIT sessions and at-home practice. The results, however, are even sweeter. Kids who were once labeled as "problem children" by parents and teachers experience increased self-esteem, improved social skills, and decreased depression. Parents and other family members are able to connect with and enjoy their children much more. Everyone in the family benefits from reduced stress and improved relationships. Take it from Tyler's mom: "PCIT changed our lives. I couldn't be happier with the results."

Kate taught me how to use "Play Time" to build and strengthen the relationship and attachment between [my daughter] and myself...[Kate] direction and encouragement has greatly improved the quality of life for my family and me.

— A CASGSL parent in PCIT



WELCOME OUR NEW ADDITIONS TO CASGSL



Bennita L. Higgins MBA received her Masters Degree in Business Administration from Fontbonne University and her Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Harris-Stowe State University. She has over 9 years experience as an Accountant for Monsanto, Federated Department Stores, NAED and Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri. Bennita's duties include accounts receivable and payables for Children's Advocacy Center. She is currently studying for the CPA Exam.



Andrea Williams, B.A. is the Outreach Specialist for CASGSL. She holds a B.A. in Sociology and African American Studies from Smith College. She is currently working toward her M.S.W at St. Louis University. Ms. Williams has worked with at-risk children with severe behavioral and emotional problems for over 10 years. Ms. Williams is responsible for connecting families and community organizations to the various services provided by CASGSL.

CHILD TRAUMA COLLOQUIUM SERIES CALENDAR



Child Sexual Behavior Problems

Amanda Schmitt, M.S.W., PLCSW
Thursday December 20th, 2007 8:30 am - 9:30 am

Accurate Diagnosis of Trauma Spectrum Disorders in Children

Matt Kliethermes, Ph.D.
Thursday January 17th, 2008 8:30 am - 9:30 am

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

Kate Drewry, LCSW
Thursday February 21st, 2008 8:30am - 9:30am

Internet Crimes Against Children

Lt. Joe Laramie Director, ICAC Task Force of Missouri
March 20th, 2008 8:30am - 9:30am

CURRENT STAFF MEMBERS

Executive Director

Jerry H. Dunn, Ph.D.

Administrative

Jackie Madison
Joyce Rudroff
Judith Cates, M.A., LPC
Bennita Higgins, MBA

Clinical Staff

Kate Drewry, MSW, LCSW
Megan Garza, M.A.
Ari Holtz, Ph.D.
Matthew Kliethermes, Ph.D.
Sharon D. Kramer, M.Ed., LPC
Sujatha Ramesh, Ph. D.
Keisha Ross, M.S.
Megan M. Schacht, Ph.D.
Amanda Schmitt, M.S.W., PLCSW
Natalie H. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Forensic Investigative Staff

Megan Fitzgerald, LCSW
Blake Schneider, M.S.W.
Beverly Tucker, M.C.J.A

Medical Staff

Timothy Kutz, M.D.
Karen Bly, R.N.

Intake Staff

Lakebra Glover
Lindsay Kemper

Outreach Staff

Ashley Stockman, B.A.
Andrea Williams, B.A.

Reception Staff

Angel Robinson
Sequita Bean
Laila Dawn



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WHAT \$100 DOLLARS COULD DO:

- Buy art supplies to help traumatized children express their feelings about their experiences
- Buy ten copies of workbooks for a Parent's Group
- Buy ten copies of workbooks used by traumatized children and adolescents during counseling
- Pay to follow a child's progress for two years after she/he finishes counseling to make sure that the child maintains her/his gains
- Buy therapeutic board games to help children recover from abuse and neglect
- Buy four sets of appropriate toys to give to families to promote positive interaction between parents and children and practice skills they learned in counseling.
- Purchase a pair of anatomically correct dolls used in forensic interviews.



SEE INSIDE TO LEARN HOW
YOUR DONATION IS TAX
DEDUCTIBLE!