

ZOEY'S PLACE (HCCAC) COUNCIL PROPOSAL

"For the Well-being of Every Child"

Significant Historical Events

September 15, 2015 – Hancock County Child Advocacy Center (HCCAC) the CAC becomes an incorporated, independent, nonprofit agency with its 501c3 status.

Shortly after attaining this designation, the key champion from the Prosecutor's office spearheading the efforts to start the HCCAC resigned. Major murder trials ensued thereafter which prevented the necessary time to work on Center development.

November 2017 – A team of committed professionals met to re-establish goals for HCCAC.

April 5, 2018 – A meeting was set to elect (HCCAC) Board and Board Officers:

Zoey's Place Executive Board:

Bridget Foy, Board President – Hancock County Sheriff's Department

Nichole Gilbert, Vice President – Greenfield Police Department

Miles Hercamp, Treasurer – Southern Hancock School District

Rita Fish, Secretary – Century 21

Brent Eaton – Prosecutor

Bonnie Wooten – Board attorney

Amanda Everidge – Hancock Regional Hospital

Josh Sipes – Hancock County Probation Department

Kristen Fewell – Greenfield School District

Katie Molinder – Hancock County Assessor

Zoey's Place Advisory Committee:

Randy Ballinger

Erika Bruggeman

Brad Burkhart

Marie Castetter

Shannon Crull

Ross Ferson

Marciann McClarnon-Miller

Terry Miller

Michelle Poppino

Louise Thompson

Caitlin VanOverberghe

Cathy Wilson

August 29, 2018 – Board of Directors voted for the (HCCAC) to Do Business as (D/B/A) Zoey's Place Child Advocacy Center. The name of Zoey's Place is to commemorate the death of 1 year old Zoey Wagoner of Greenfield, IN.

September 2018 – Zoey's Place (HCCAC) was awarded a \$25,000 grant from State Farm Neighborhood Assist Program. The Board of Directors is extremely proud of this achievement as it was the community of Hancock County who united together and voted for HCCAC to win this grant.

October 25, 2018 – A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by all law enforcement agencies chiefs' and sheriff of Hancock County. Also included in signing was the Hancock County Prosecutor's Office and the Board President of Zoey's Place (HCCAC)

November 4, 2018 – Zoey's Place (HCCAC) held its first fundraising event which raised over \$10,000. Since then the Center has been involved in planning and initiating other fundraising events. The community has also rallied around the cause for Zoey's Place (HCCAC) and the Center is gaining more notoriety. HCCAC has seen an increase in private donations since fall of 2018 and is also involved in writing grants to help fund the project.

Mission

The mission of Zoey's Place Child Advocacy Center is to minimize trauma to child victims of sexual / physical abuse and neglect by providing a centralized, safe and child-focused facility from which a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) conducts investigations and intervention activities. Zoey's Place goals are to reduce trauma, seek justice, and foster hope and healing for children and their non-offending caregivers.

Nature, Purpose, and Benefits of Zoey's Place (HCCAC)

There are approximately 17,000 children living in Hancock County Indiana. According to the website statistics for the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) for Child Abuse and Neglect, Hancock County had 270 Substantiated cases for Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, and Neglect in the year 2018. A Substantiated case by definition for the DCS is considered an "Open Assessment" which means a child/children within that report are considered "at risk." Children who face unfortunate traumatic events such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, or are witness to a violent crime often have to repeat their accounts over and over to multiple agencies including social workers, law enforcement, victim's advocates, and to attorney's. The locations that children go to give their accounts are often in a cold and scary environment such as police stations, hospital rooms, or in the child services office. Locations such as these are sterile environments that are often open to public access and are not considered "child-focused." This places more stress and trauma on a child who has a burden to share their distressing story with an adult they do not know.

Zoey's Place's (HCCAC) primary goal is to reduce the impact of trauma on the child and family. Therefore, the Center will be designed with the child in mind. Creating a space for children will reduce the amount of repeated interviews by multiple agencies and help to alleviate the stress the child might feel going into a cold environment.

Zoey's Place (HCCAC) facilitates a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) of professionals which include law enforcement, child protective services, prosecutors, medical and mental health, and child/victim advocacy. The purpose of the MDT is to enhance the response of investigations in suspected sex abuse, physical abuse, or neglect cases by combining the expertise and professional knowledge of various investigative agencies and other professionals. Those involved with the Center share a core philosophy that child sexual / physical abuse or neglect are

a multifaceted community problem and that no single agency, individual or discipline has the necessary knowledge, skills or resources to serve the needs of children and their families.

Zoey's Place (HCCAC) is committed to ensure that the systems designed to protect children are able to do so effectively through culturally competent policies and practices.

Outcome Measures

1) Zoey's Place (HCCAC) will maintain a log of children interviewed and a log of Multidisciplinary Team Members (MDT) that use the facility.

2) Zoey's Place (HCCAC) will develop and use a *Client Satisfaction Survey*. The Center will survey a minimum of 15 parents/guardians of clients or 30% of their caseload (whichever results in a larger number) randomly selected, no less than quarterly starting in January of each calendar year. The expectation of results from the survey should be 90% of respondents (parents of direct service clients) will rate the services "satisfactory" or above on the Client Satisfaction Survey.

3) Consistent, monthly case reviews will be conducted with the MDT. The purpose of these meetings will be to provide collaborative efforts for more efficient investigations, to improve client outcomes and obtain successful prosecutions. Zoey's Place will be responsible for organizing the case reviews with the MDT and recording case outcomes.

4) Annually survey Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) members, including probation staff, to ensure the Center is meeting expectations.

5) Zoey's Place will maintain the recordings of the forensic interviews conducted with the victims of abuse for court purposes.

6) Victims and their non-offending caregivers will be referred to mental health services so the healing process from their experiences can continue.

7) Medical evaluations and exams will be conducted at an appropriate medical facility

8) Prevention and education programs will be provided by Zoey's Place for the schools and the community.

Mental Health

"Without effective therapeutic intervention, many traumatized children will suffer ongoing or long-term adverse social, emotional, developmental and health outcomes that may impact them throughout their lifetimes." (*National Children's Alliance – Standards for Accredited Members 2017 Edition*)

The health and healing process begins when the child enters through the Center's door. With the focus on the child, the Center's commitment to mental health and emotional well-being of the child must be a priority. Therapy enables children who have been abused to develop a healthy self-image, learn to trust again, and to identify ways to protect themselves from further victimization. Additionally, mental health services provided to children decrease the ongoing and long-term social, emotional, and developmental outcomes of trauma.

Another key to a child's protection and recovery, is the caregiver's capacity to support the child. Caregivers themselves may have been victimized themselves from past sex abuse, physical abuse, or neglect. Mental health treatment may help provide caregivers information, support, and coping strategies for themselves, for their child, and other sibling in the home.

Medical Evaluation

The purpose of the medical evaluation for Zoey's Place is:

- 1) To help ensure the health, safety and well-being of every child;
- 2) To diagnose, document and address any medical conditions resulting from abuse;
- 3) To differentiate medical findings that are indicative of abuse from those which may be explained by other medical conditions or caused by accident;
- 4) To assess the child for any developmental, emotional or behavioral problems needing further evaluations and treatment and make referrals as necessary;
- 5) To reassure and educate the child and non-offending caregiver(s).

Medical evaluations are conducted by health care providers with pediatric experience and child abuse expertise. Currently, those evaluations are referred to Community Hospital in Anderson, Indiana. Child victims of abuse who need immediate medical evaluation are served in hospital emergency rooms.

Zoey's Place Immediate Goals

- 1) Establish a location
- 2) Hire an Executive Director
 - a. Oversee all aspect of the daily operations for a non-profit organization
 - b. ****Will initially be the primary interviewer until the center can fund an additional forensic interviewer****

- c. Manage the center's personnel including hiring, supervision, benefits administration, and policies
- d. Serve as spokesman to promote Zoey's Place and the services provided to the community
- e. Maintain all financial records of the organization
- f. Ensure maintenance of the center's property
- g. Manage support for Zoey's Place Board of Directors and committee
- h. Represent Zoey's Place in relationships with partnering organizations, ensuring services align with best practice recommendations
- i. Participate in training and education efforts for the Multidisciplinary Team and law enforcement
- j. Implement training and education programs in Hancock County schools to include education programs for adults
- k. Participate in fundraising and grant writing in order to fund the center

Zoey's Place Forecasted Goals

- 1) Maintain sustainability – apply for grants, continue fundraisers, and continue community support. Apply for DCS grant money (*see below*). Partially fund Zoey's Place by local government agencies in Hancock County
- 2) Hire a full time interviewer
- 3) Contract with a mental health facility to provide counseling services to the victims and their non-offending caregivers

Financial

Department of Child Services – RFP (Request for Proposals) Region 11 (Tipton, Hamilton, Madison, and Hancock Counties)

At this time, there are not any funding opportunities available from the Department of Child Services outside of the current CAC contracts. The current contracts do not expire until Sept 2020 so the next RFP for CAC contracts would not be put out until around spring/summer of 2020 for new contracts beginning October 2020. The DCS RFP's is a competitive process for all Indiana CAC's, therefore, there is no guarantee that Zoey's Place would receive financial help.

Zoey's Place is requesting \$50,000.00 in funding from local government agencies to support its cause of creating a child-focused space. Looking back into the last line of Zoey's Place mission statement you will find the sole purpose of this request: To reduce trauma to children, to support better criminal investigations in cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and witness to violent crimes, and to seek mental health help to victims and their families.

Notable contributors include:

Hancock Regional Hospital Community Foundation
NineStar Operation Round-up
Hancock County Bar Association
Hancock County Government employees Christmas party donation
GYCBB 6th grade basketball team
Central Supply Company
VFW Auxiliary
American Health Network
McCordsville Police Department
Hancock County Sheriff's Department
Cumberland Police Department
Dairy Queen fundraiser
Hancock County FOP Bingo night fundraiser
Many other monetary personal donations coming in on a continual basis

Upcoming scheduled events:

Couch to 5k fundraiser
Culver's restaurant fundraiser night
Mozzi's Pizza fundraiser night
Lincoln Square Pancake House
Bowl for Zoey

