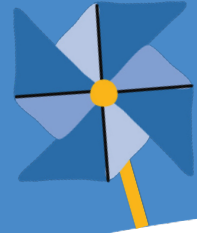




Child Abuse Prevention Month

Our Mission:
We collaborate with community partners to respond to and prevent child abuse.

pinwheels for child abuse prevention



SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

PLANT A PINWHEEL FOR A CHILD

BY FAITH BOEHMER, PREVENTION & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

In 1983, Congress designated April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time for communities nationwide to come together and shine a light on the fight against child maltreatment. Every April, we have an opportunity to raise awareness, take action, and reaffirm our commitment to protecting children.

One simple yet powerful way to show support is by planting a pinwheel garden. The pinwheel is more than just a decoration—it's a symbol of hope, representing the safe, stable, and nurturing childhood every child deserves. By displaying pinwheels in yards, businesses, and public spaces, we send a clear message: child welfare is everyone's responsibility.

April is not only a time for awareness but also for reflection. In the last fiscal year alone (July 2023–June 2024), 772 children were referred to the CAC. These numbers remind us of the real, urgent need for action. But April is also about looking forward—envisioning a future where no child has to live in fear, where every child grows up in a safe and loving environment.

Our children are our greatest treasure. Yet, too many still experience the pain of abuse and neglect. This month serves as a powerful reminder that, no matter what challenges we face, protecting children must remain a top priority.

By planting a pinwheel garden, you take a stand. You help spark conversations, spread awareness, and encourage others to join in creating safer communities for our children. Together, we can build a future where every child has the chance to thrive.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER PINWHEEL GARDEN PLANTING

**TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2025 @ 12 PM
222 ROWAN STREET**

Join us at the Child Advocacy Center as we plant blue pinwheels to represent the bright future that every child deserves and to kick-off April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Together we can sow seeds of hope and support for vulnerable children in our community.



Get your pinwheel gear & pinwheels to plant your pinwheel garden!



#WearBlueDay

April 4, 2025

Please join the CAC and many others who will be wearing blue to honor all children who have been victimized by child abuse. Share your picture on social media and use the following hashtag #WearBlueDay.



TICKETS WILL GO ON SALE APRIL 14, 2025 FOR THE 9TH ANNUAL FAYETTEVILLE'S ULTIMATE LIP SYNC SHOWDOWN

PRESENTED BY FAYETTEVILLE ACADEMY

Join us at the Crown Center Ballroom to see the best of the best Lip Syncers battle it out to become the next Fayetteville Ultimate Lip Sync Showdown Winner. All proceeds directly benefit programs provided by the Child Advocacy Center to victims of child abuse right here in our community. This year, there will be two shows, an afternoon featuring youth performers at 1:00 pm and an evening adult show at 7:00 PM. Tickets for the May 17 shows will be on sale beginning April 14, 2025, at the Crown Center Box Office. If you or a group are interested in performing, you can still enter the competition by contacting Karen Tisdale- the event chairperson, at caclipsync@gmail.com for your registration packet, judging criteria, and complete list of event rules. Don't miss this chance to take home the \$500 cash prize for the Ultimate Lip Sync Winner in either the Youth or Adult division. Be sure to check our social media and website to receive the latest information about the show. We look forward to seeing you at the show either in the audience or up on stage!

Save the Date!

May 17, 2025
matinee @ 1pm • evening show @ 7pm

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFO

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

BY FAITH BOEHMER, PREVENTION & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

During the month of February, we recognize four of our outstanding volunteers that have had a huge impact on our work at the Child Advocacy Center.

event calendar

CHECK OUT
OUR EVENT
CALENDAR



"VOLUNTEERING HELPS YOU GET OUTSIDE OF YOURSELF AND GIVES YOU A SENSE OF PRIDE IN KNOWING YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING TO HELP OTHERS AND HELP YOUR COMMUNITY. THE CAC IS SPECIAL TO ME BECAUSE OF THE WORK THEY DO TO HELP SO MANY CHILDREN THAT ARE BEING ABUSED IN OUR COMMUNITY.."

CECILE GRIFIN has been volunteering at the CAC since her retirement in 2015. She shares that she passed by the CAC on a daily pass as she would drive to and from work. She decided to research what the CAC did. After researching, she knew that this was just what she was looking for. Volunteering can bring about its own set of challenges. Cecile has found herself trying to calm her nerves as she heads out to a preschool class to lead them in a body safety class. Teaching some of our youngest citizens about their body. But even mixed in with the uneasiness of something that can be a sensitive topic, she finds that volunteering time brings her a sense of pride knowing that she is doing something to help others, a young child (ren), to understand how to recognize when they are not feeling comfortable.



"EVERY VISIT IS UNIQUE, BUT I DO REMEMBER ONE WHEN A YOUNG GIRL WAS VISITING WITH HER PARENTS AND YOU COULD REALLY FEEL THE TENSION IN THE ROOM AS THEY WAITED FOR THE GIRL'S INTERVIEW. QUINN, PROCEEDED TO GET UP AND KIND OF FORCED HER WAY IN BETWEEN THE TABLE AND THE SOFA TO GET TO THE LITTLE GIRL AND RESTED HER HEAD ON THE LITTLE GIRL'S LAP. SHE BEGAN TO PET QUINN. AS SHE DID, YOU COULD FEEL THE ANXIETY LEAVE THE ROOM. THE GIRL AND HER PARENTS ALL BEGAN TO RELAX AND ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION. DOGS FEEL EMPATHY AND SEEM TO KNOW HOW TO RESPOND. IT WAS PRETTY AMAZING!"

DAVID RUNKLE is one of those treasured handlers. He began volunteering with his Therapy Dog, Quinn, in March of 2023. He loves to come in with Quinn and visit the staff before he heads into the family room with a family that has come. The staff love to see him coming. Often, Quinn and our other therapy dogs, can add a smile and lessen the stress of the day as the staff take a break to greet the dog.



"IS AT THE END OF THE PMBA SEASON WHEN I SEE HOW ALL THE HARD WORK, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, PUTTING AUCTION PACKAGES TOGETHER THEN TO SEE THE FINAL RESULT OF THE GUEST ATTENDEES COMING IN DONNING THEIR MASKS, BEAUTIFUL DRESSES AND TUXES, ETC. I SEE THE EXCITEMENT ON PEOPLE'S FACES TO BE A PART OF SOMETHING THAT SUPPORTS THE CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY."

CATHY WHITE entered the world of volunteering for the CAC through having other non-profit fundraising experience. She specifically has worked with Auctions—both in person and online. Her experience brought her to be a part of the Pinwheel Masquerade Ball & Auction planning committee. Over the year Cathy has volunteered with many animal rescues and currently volunteers with It Takes a Village Rescue NC. From about May – October, you can find Cathy work diligently on the Live and Silent Auction for the PMBA. She manages all the donated items as they come in. This past year she helped us go online with an online platform for our silent Auction



"VOLUNTEERING, FOR ME, IS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE MY GIFTS I MAY HAVE TO CONTRIBUTE TO A MISSION THAT FOCUSES ON EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION FOR CHILD ABUSE, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND CHILD SAFETY.."

JULIE LEE-JACOBS, is a member of the Board of Directors for the Child Advocacy Center, as well as serves on the Pinwheel Masquerade Ball and Auction Planning Committee. She began her service with the CAC in 2017. Since then, she has served in a variety of ways.

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

THE CAC IS VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL BENEFACTORS WHO HAVE AGREED TO BE YEAR-LONG SPONSORS FOR CAC EVENTS.

CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN:



STARS:

Pattie Collie
Lafayette Baptist Church
Lucy & Wes Jones
Mike & Ann Morketter/Labels Etc. Inc.
Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church
Systel Business Equipment
Snyder Memorial Baptist Church
Truist



HEROES:

Beasley Broadcasting
Brown & Associates Investment Services
Timothy D. Edwards, Family Law Attorney
Dr. Howard and Joyce Loughlin
Dr. Robin and Debbie Jenkins
Dr. Wes and Lucy Jones
Leslie Dysinger Real Estate

AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS AND SUPPORTERS WHO HELP US PROVIDE THE VERY BEST SERVICES TO THE CHILD VICTIMS OF ABUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY. WE COULD NOT DO THIS WORK WITHOUT YOUR GENEROSITY.



Our Volunteers & Partners Are Making a Difference

We appreciate your dedication to helping our community.

By: John Webster, Executive Director



We had a wonderful evening on February 27, 2025, celebrating the incredible impact of our Multi-Disciplinary Team and Volunteers. Thank you for your dedication, compassion, and commitment to changing lives—one child at a time

THE FOLLOWING MDT MEMBERS WERE RECOGNIZED:

MOST OBSERVED FORENSIC INTERVIEWS BY AGENCY:

- Andrew Phelan - Cumberland County Sheriff's Office
- Ashlynn Duncan - Fayetteville Police Department
- Heather Watson - Cumberland County Department of Social Services
- Det. Antoinette Hurtt - Spring Lake Police Department
- Darrell Morgan - Hope Mills Police Department
- Special Agent Sofia Piturro - Criminal Investigation Division, Ft. Bragg

MOST ATTENDED CASE REVIEWS BY AN INVESTIGATOR:

- 1st place: Ashlynn Duncan - Fayetteville Police Department
- 2nd place: Roldan Jackson - Fayetteville Police Department
- 3rd place: Andrew Phelan - Cumberland County Sheriff's Office

MOST ATTENDED CASE REVIEWS BY A PARTNER

- AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE: 1st place: Caitlyn Lacey - DA's office
- 2nd place: Kelsey Gawinski - DA's office
- 3rd place: Danielle Thomas-Taylor - Southern Regional AHEC

100% AGENCY ATTENDANCE AT CASE REVIEW

- Cumberland County Department of Social Services
- District Attorney's Office

MOST OBSERVED FORENSIC INTERVIEWS OVERALL

- Ashlynn Duncan - Fayetteville Police Department

ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARD - FOR OUTSTANDING SUPPORT OF THE CAC AND THE MDT

- Sgt. Timothy Huggins - Fayetteville Police Department

THE FOLLOWING VOLUNTEERS WERE RECOGNIZED:

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY GROUP:

LAFAYETTE BAPTIST CHURCH

FACILITATOR OF THE YEAR: BENJAMIN KOWALEZK

THERAPY DOG HANDLER: SHANA GUIDI & JEANNE ROPPOLI

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY LEADER:

MAYOR KIA ANTHONY FROM SPRING LAKE

SHINE AWARD: NADINE MILLER BERNARD

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: JOHN KINSTREY

40+ HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE:

- Anita Flowers, Ashley Owen, Beth Keever, Beth Lee, Candace Coleman, Cathy White, Cecile Griffin, Chris Lee, DeLisa Crosby, Jackie Davis, Jackie O'Donnell, Jeff Shorts, John Kinstrey, Julie Lee-Jacobs, Karen Tisdale, Lauren Averitt, Lucy Jones, Mary McCoy, Nadine Miller Bernard, Sharon Kinstrey, Sharon Mozingo, Stan Griffin, Valerie Shorts, Wendy Vonnegut

THE FOLLOWING COUNSELING VOLUNTEERS

RECEIVED THE LIFE GUARD AWARD:

- LaTisha Culbreth-Robinson; Taneidra Nixon; Matilda Page

We applaud all our volunteers and MDT members for their passion and desire to help child victims of abuse in our community. Without each of their passions, willingness, care for the children and so much more the staff of the CAC would not be able to accomplish our mission to bring help, hope and healing to children and their families in our community impacted by child abuse. We thank them for their willing heart, their never-ending support, their love for children and desire to see this epidemic of child abuse end.



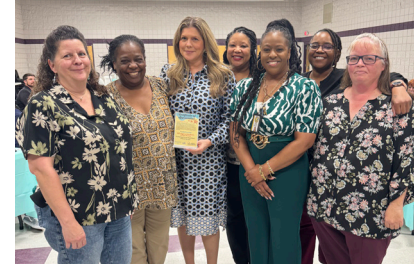
SHINE award - Nadine Miller Bernard



Volunteer of the Year—John Kinstrey



Volunteer Group of the Year—Lafayette Baptist Church



100% Agency Attendance at Case Review Cumberland County Department of Social Services



100% Agency Attendance at Case Review District Attorney's Office



Above and Beyond Award—Sgt. Timothy Huggins, Fayetteville Police Department

WELCOME TO OUR NEW THERAPIST, SAMMY SOZA

Sammy Soza has joined our therapist Oretha Harris (Contracted) to provide services to children who have been served by the CAC. Sammy is not a stranger to the CAC. He previously interned with Oretha. He began work on February 1, 2025. Welcome Sammy!



BE THEIR VOICE 5K RUN FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Fayetteville Running Club donated \$5100 to WORTH Court and the Child Advocacy Center from the Human Trafficking 5 K Run held in January Pictured L-R: Bobbi Mattocks, Bengie Hair, Daisy Thorne, Faith Boehmer, Shawn Wussow, John Webster



become a sponsor



CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

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www.CACFayNC.org

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WHAT WE DO

A Place of Healing and Hope: Joining hands with community agencies, the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) offers a safe and child-friendly place to interview and provide support for child victims of abuse. The CAC also provides prevention education for parents, professionals, and agencies in our community. We look to a future where all children live in a safe and nurturing environment free from abuse.

During FY 2024, the Child Advocacy Center received 772 cases of reported child abuse. 444 forensic interviews were conducted at the Center. 433 families received Victim Family Advocacy Services, providing direct aid as well as assisting them in accessing needed resources. 105 children attended individual counseling, and 39 children participated in group counseling. 1090 people received child abuse prevention and awareness education. Volunteers contributed 1945 hours of service to the CAC. For additional information, please visit CACFAYNC.org.

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

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Wendy Vonnegut, J.D.

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Faith Boehmer, **Prevention/Volunteer Coordinator**

Lynnelle Brands, **Forensic Interviewer/**

Victim Family Advocate

Elizabeth Dorn, **Victim Family Advocate/Case Manager**

Amy Hansen, **Lead Forensic Interview,**

MDT facilitator and Victim Family Advocate

Robertta Humphries, **Financial Manager**

Renee Pridgen, **Program Assistant**

Dahlia Talley, **Victim Family Advocate**

Oretha Harris, LCMHC-S, **Psychotherapist**

(contracted)

Sammy Soza, LCMHC-A **(contracted)**