



# The National Children's Advocacy Center



February 2008

*\* to model, promote, and deliver excellence in child abuse response and prevention through service, education, and leadership\**

National Children's Advocacy Center 210 Pratt Avenue Huntsville, AL 35801 Phone: (256) 533-KIDS (5437) Fax: (256) 327-3864

## Ways to Give in 2008

**NCAC Membership:** You can make a difference in the lives of the children and families by becoming a member of the NCAC. Memberships start at as little as \$25 a year, but have a HUGE impact in many lives. To make a donation please visit our website and click on the **Donate Now** button. You can also send checks by mail. Together we can make a difference....one child at a time!

**September Celebration Sponsors:** We are currently seeking event sponsors for our largest annual fundraiser. Held in September, the Celebration is a two day event starting on Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup> and continuing on Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Friday night is a night of "Elegance and Atmosphere" with dinner, dancing, and auctions. Monday is the Spike McRoy Kids Classic golf tournament. Sponsorships start at \$1,000 and range up to \$7,500. Each sponsorship level also comes with marketing and event benefits. Contact Catherine Hereford at 256-327-3780 or [chereford@nationalcac.org](mailto:chereford@nationalcac.org) for more information.



**Community Partner:** For a donation of \$5,000 your business or organization can be a 2008 Community Partner. With your donation you will receive marketing benefits, expert advise on child welfare issues for your employees or members, and a reception with Congressman Bud Cramer. The NCAC will benefit from the partnership by using your donation to provide funding for our programs and services that help those in our local community. For more details on how to get involved contact Catherine Hereford at 256-327-3780 or [chereford@nationalcac.org](mailto:chereford@nationalcac.org)

## 2008 Community Partners

<http://www.nationalcac.org/community/partners/>



## Professional Spotlight

### **Cassandra Leslie**



*Cassandra is on staff at the NCAC as the Family Advocate Coordinator, a part of our multi-disciplinary team. Read how she describes her job responsibilities and the challenges and rewards of her work.*

**Q:** What are your job responsibilities?

**A:** The Family Advocate program offers support to non-offending caregivers of children who have made allegations of abuse. This support involves talking with non-offending caregivers when their child first comes to the center for a forensic interview. A Family Advocate meets with the non-offending caregivers individually or in a support group with other caregivers. These caregivers are provided with emotional support and education on child sexual abuse dynamics which include but is not limited to an understanding of offender tactics, children behaviors, normal reactions of caregivers and the legal system.

My role is to supervise the Family Advocate, manage day-to-day operation of the Family Advocate program, facilitate support group, maintain a caseload, conduct crisis interviews with caregivers and provide training and consultation to other professionals.

**Q:** How many years have you been with the NCAC?

**A:** I have been with the NCAC for 11 years.

**Q:** What is your educational background?

**A:** I have a Bachelor 's degree in General Management and Theology.

**Q:** What is your favorite part of the job?

**A:** My favorite part of the job at this point in my career would be twofold, training and consultation to other professionals and the direct service of providing emotional/educational support to caregivers during a crisis.

**Q:** What is the most difficult aspect of your work?

**A:** The most difficult part of the job is having to tell a parent/caregiver that there is currently a waiting list and their child cannot receive therapy services right away.



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## From [www.nationalcac.org](http://www.nationalcac.org) "Agape Kids Room"

The Agape Kids Room, a project of the Leadership Huntsville/Madison County Class 20 Judicial/Law Enforcement Group provides a child-friendly waiting room in the Madison County Courthouse, and was placed into operation in September 2007. This project was the culmination of tremendous effort and generosity, and the enthusiastic support of the Madison County Commission and its Chairman, Mike Gillespie.

Following consultations with numerous judicial and law enforcement leaders, the Leadership Group selected a project suggested by Judge Billy Bell, Presiding Circuit Court Judge in Madison County. Judge Bell expressed the need for a waiting room dedicated for children who may be testifying in civil, divorce/family, and criminal courts, and thus, the Agape Kids Room was conceived.

According to Judge Bell, "Those children who are unfortunate to be involved in a case before our courts will now have a sanctuary- a truly happy and peaceful place to wait, rather than having to sit out in the hall, with members of both sides of the child's family, or even worst, with the person who is accused of abusing or mistreating them, sitting in the hall with them. What a wonderful legacy to leave to the children of Madison County."

The brightly colored Agape Kids Room provides a unique space within the courthouse and is drawing the attention of judicial leaders throughout the state and country. In addition to providing a dedicated waiting area for children, the room is outfitted with a computer, television/DVD player, games, toys, comfortable child-friendly furniture, and child-friendly restrooms.

Group leader, Chris Newlin, shared "this project is the result of a focused and dedicated effort, supported by the overwhelming generosity of numerous individuals and companies in our community."

As the final preparations for the Agape Kids Room were being made, Congressman Bud Cramer, former Madison County District Attorney visited the project and stated, "The Agape Kids Room is an excellent addition to the Madison County Courthouse. Testifying before a judge and jury can be unnerving for anyone in any circumstance. This situation is especially difficult for a young child who is testifying as an eyewitness against a loved one or family friend. I commend this year's Leadership class for taking steps to establish a child-friendly waiting room that will help ease the amount of stress this situation can have on our community's children."

## "Agape Kids Room" Continued...

*Child's waiting room before renovations*



*Child's waiting room after renovations*



See more on the web at  
<http://www.nationalcac.org/community/agape.html>

## Anthropologie Donates 10% of Proceeds from Opening Night

On the evening of January 30th, Anthropologie held a special VIP reception for its official store opening in Huntsville's Bridge Street. Invited guests enjoyed browsing through the variety of beautiful clothing and items for the home such as dishes, linens and books.

Lyn's Gracious Goodness generously donated a variety of delectable hors d' oeuvres including blue cheese and almond rolled grapes, stuffed mushrooms, skewered shrimp remoulade. Patsy Roberts, of the Wine Cellar in Madison, also served guests complimentary wine as they mingled and browsed the fabulous selections.

Anthropologie donated 10% of the proceeds from the evening sales to the NCAC.



For more information about NCAC programs and services please visit [www.nationalcac.org](http://www.nationalcac.org)

If you suspect child abuse, call the National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4ACHILD (800-422-4453)

To report child abuse in Huntsville or Madison County, AL call: 256-535-4500