



Children's
Advocacy Project



Creating
BRIGHTER FUTURES

2017 Annual Summary



Children's
Advocacy Project





Our Mission

The Children's Advocacy Project is a team of committed agencies and individuals who work together to provide coordinated forensic and comprehensive services for alleged victims of child abuse and neglect in order to minimize trauma to children, break the cycle of abuse, and foster a more effective and efficient community response to child maltreatment.





I was created
to *create*.



A Letter from our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

“Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I’ll try again tomorrow.” -Mary Anne Radmacher

I am sure you can think of a moment, or several moments, when you had to remind yourself to keep trying and not give in to the challenges you were facing. The many children who enter our doors at the Children’s Advocacy Project face challenges most of us could never imagine, especially at such a young, innocent time of childhood. Yet, children as young as two years old and as old as 18 find the courage each day to “try again tomorrow” as they work through the trauma of abuse. The 303 children who entered our doors last year to tell their stories of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and other unimaginable experiences prove the strength and resilience of the human spirit within a child.

The team at the Children’s Advocacy Project is honored to provide a safe and child friendly environment where child victims of abuse can show their courage by telling their stories and begin their journeys of healing. As we enter 2018, CAP’s dedication to child victims will be as strong as ever. Thank you for your dedication to CAP and especially the children we serve!



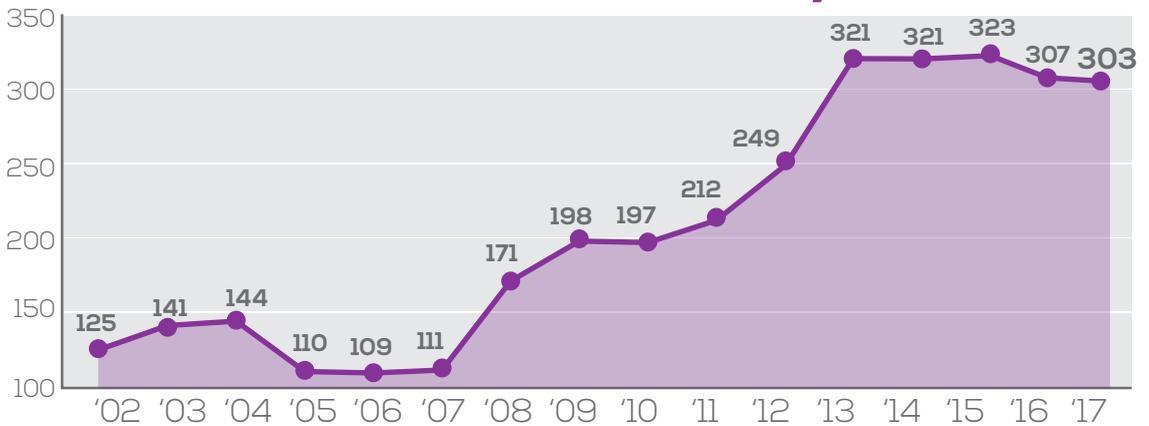
Stacy M. Nelson, Executive Director



3,646

Forensic Interviews conducted since opening

Forensic Interviews by Year



442

Individual Counseling Sessions were Conducted in 2017



360

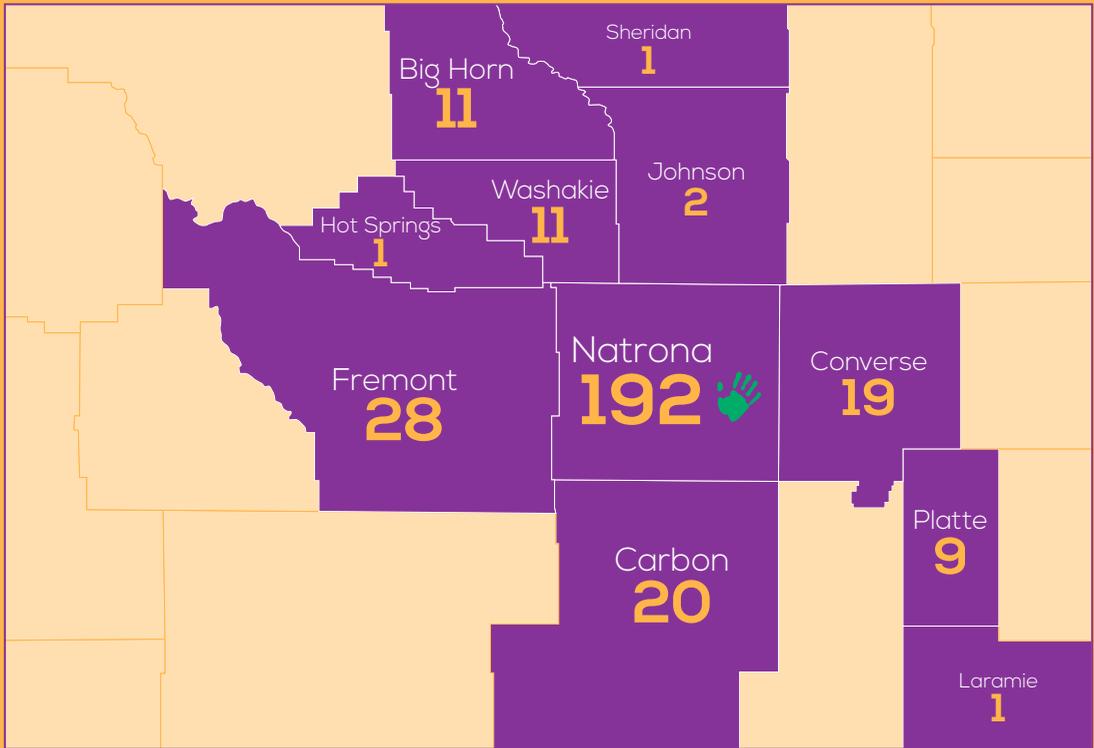
Children Attended a CAP In-school Training



145

Adults Attended a CAP Community Training

Forensic Interviews Conducted by County



Other Courtesy Interviews: Colorado: **5**,
Nebraska: **2**, Arkansas: **1**,

Art washes away the soul from the
dust of everyday life. - Picasso



Don't be afraid to let your *Brushstrokes* show

Brittney's mom and dad divorced when she was only two years old. Her dad got primary physical custody because of her mom's history of substance abuse. The custody agreement allowed her to see her mom every other weekend and for dinner on Wednesdays. Her mom had to get a second job and sometimes cancelled their weekends because of work. Brittney missed her mom's company more and more as she got older.

When Brittney was six, her dad met Cathy. Brittney and Cathy got along well and when Cathy moved in, Brittney was excited to have a new mom. Soon they bought a new house. Her dad got a new job and Cathy became a stay at home mom. Brittney saw less and less of her biological mom, but it didn't matter so much because she had Cathy. Then her dad was laid off.

Both her dad and Cathy got part time jobs at a retail store, working opposite shifts so they didn't have to pay for daycare. When they were together, her dad and Cathy fought. A lot. They had to sell their house because they couldn't afford the payments. First, they moved into Cathy's parents' house. It was hard

for Brittney to change schools, but she made some friends and that made it easier. Her mom and dad continued to fight. Soon, they decided to "take a break."

Cathy remained at her parents' house and Brittney and her dad moved into an apartment with some of his friends. She and her dad had to share a room, but that was okay because her dad wasn't there very much. He had to get a second job to help pay the bills. Her dad's friends, Greg and Jocelyn, watched her while he was at work. Greg was really nice. He helped Brittney braid her hair and sometimes rubbed her feet or gave her a back rub if she had a bad day.

One day, Greg bought Brittney a tablet. She had really, really wanted one, but her dad couldn't afford it. Greg said she was a good friend and a pretty girl, and she should have nice things. She was so excited! He told her to give him a hug and a kiss as a thank you. She hugged him and kissed his cheek. Greg helped her set up her tablet.

When her dad found out about the tablet, her dad and Greg had a really big fight. She begged her dad to let her keep

it, and eventually he gave in. Sometimes Greg and Brittney would watch YouTube together. Usually, though, she just played games alone in the room she shared with her dad.

The day after her ninth birthday, Greg told Brittney he had a surprise for her but she needed to keep it a secret from her dad. She was curious and excited and promised. Greg had bought her a phone! It wasn't a fancy phone, but she could text on it. Brittney felt bad about keeping a secret from her dad, but she remembered how mad he'd been about the tablet. Greg explained it was a "pay as you go" phone and that she could have to earn minutes in order for the phone to work. She told him she would clean the house and do anything he needed her to do. Greg told her to give him a hug and kiss. When she did, he turned his head and the kiss landed on his lips. Brittney felt embarrassed, but Greg just laughed and told her she was a pretty girl.

After that, Greg kept buying her things like new clothes and even some make up. He always told her to keep it a secret and Brittney found it was easier and easier to do. Her dad was rarely home and he didn't seem to notice what she was wearing or doing. Most of the time, he just went to sleep on Greg and Jocelyn's couch. She and Greg would go to the room she shared with her dad and lay on the bed talking and playing on her tablet. Sometimes, he would tell her to spoon with him, or to cuddle up next to him.

One day, he slid his hand down her pants and rubbed her butt. Brittney was surprised and afraid and she didn't know what

to do so she pretended not to notice. Greg laughed and kissed her on the lips. Then he got up and left the room. Brittney was so scared! She didn't know what to do, so she didn't do anything and hoped it was an accident. The next day, Greg came into her room and told her to take her shirt off and let him look at her. She said she didn't want to, but Greg told her she "owed" him for all the nice things he'd bought her and "the price had gone up."

Brittney felt like she had no choice. He gave her a phone, a tablet, new clothes, makeup and other things she had wanted. He had rarely asked her to do any chores. The first time was the hardest, but soon she learned to go somewhere else in her mind when Greg came in and ordered her to undress. Then the touching began. Over time, the touching became more aggressive and one night Greg raped her. Brittney tried to find excuses to be away from the apartment if her dad was at work, but she couldn't be gone all the time. She felt trapped and blamed herself for what was happening. If only she hadn't taken the tablet or the other stuff....

Brittney thought if she could be "perfect," she could erase the bad stuff. She became a straight A student. She became so helpful at the apartment that her dad said she was going to "make someone a good



wife someday.”

When puberty arrived, Brittney was terrified she would become pregnant. Her secret had torn her up inside and she attempted suicide. Thankfully, Jocelyn found her and called 911. Greg was waiting in the hospital room when she was admitted, telling her he loved her and she would be okay. From the hospital, she was taken to an inpatient facility where she was finally able to tell a therapist about the sexual abuse. The therapist contacted local law enforcement who briefly met with her, then scheduled a forensic interview at The Children’s Advocacy Project.

The forensic interview was the “best and scariest” thing Brittney had ever done. It felt so good to finally be able to tell her story. She was scared about what would happen next and if her dad was going to be mad at her. After the interview, her dad cried and told her how sorry he was. He told her he had already found them a new place to live and that Greg was in jail and would never touch her again.

Brittney was referred to a CAP therapist for trauma therapy. All the therapists at CAP are trained to provide research-based, nationally recognized Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and other therapeutic interventions. The therapist worked with Brittney and her father to understand the grooming process and helped them work together to become better at communicating. Brittney and her father both received individual therapy as well. Through that experience, they were able to heal as individuals and a family.

Greg pled guilty to several counts of

First Degree Sexual Abuse of a Minor. At his sentencing hearing, both Brittney and her father told the judge how the sexual abuse had changed their lives forever. Brittney described the fear, shame and loneliness she had felt for several years while living with Greg and Jocelyn. Her father talked about his guilt, anger and helplessness. The judge sentenced Greg to 20 years in prison.

Brittney’s father recently found a new, better paying job and they moved into a nicer apartment near a school. They continue to participate in individual and family therapy at CAP and are learning to heal while they build a stronger, healthier father-daughter relationship.

The Children’s Advocacy Project team was available to offer Brittney the help and support she needed to recover and heal. Without the support of the forensic interviewer, therapist, law enforcement, medical staff, Department of Family Services and others, Brittney’s story could have ended much differently. Had her first suicide attempt not been successful, it is likely she would have tried again. 85% of child sexual abuse victims experience physical, behavioral and emotional problems throughout their lives. These include sexual promiscuity and early pregnancy, criminal activities and drug use, depression, bi-polar disorder, and many more.

Life isn't about
finding yourself,
it's about creating
yourself.



What We Do



Child tells that they are being hurt by someone they know



Child goes to emergency room and receives a Sexual Assault Exam



Child receives a Forensic Interview at CAP that is monitored by the Multidisciplinary Team to ensure it is legally sound and developmentally appropriate



Children's Advocacy Project, District Attorney's Office, Law Enforcement, and the Department of Family Services are all notified and begin working together on a joint investigation



The victim is referred to a counselor to help them deal with the trauma, manage panic attacks, nightmares, and practice assertive communication skills



Family or caregivers receive support and information from CAP's Child Advocate



CAP continues to provide counseling and checks in with families frequently to offer support



The Team has helped to put together a sound case in court. CAP helps the child prepare a victim impact statement

The Team of Professionals

The Children's Advocacy Project works along side a multidisciplinary team to provide comprehensive services to child victims of abuse. That team is made up of:

The District Attorney/Prosecutor: An attorney decides whether charges will be filed. Factors considered are age and maturity of the child, the child's ability to testify, whether or not the suspect has admitted to the allegations, presence of medical evidence and whether or not there are other witnesses.

The Victim Service Office: A victim services professional in the D.A. or Law Enforcement Office who coordinates the court preparation, and helps victims and their families understand the legal process.

Law Enforcement Officer/Investigator: An officer works with children and non-offending caregivers to collect information. They also interview any suspects and adult witnesses and gather evidence from the scene of alleged events.

The Social Worker: A social worker helps to protect the child, conduct interviews, and develop safety plans. They may refer the family or child to counseling.

The Child Forensic Interviewer: A child forensic interviewer is a trained professional who is responsible for providing legally defensible forensic interviews of children and adolescents when there are suspicions of abuse or when the child has been a witness to violence against another person.

The Nurse Practitioner/SANE Nurse: A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) may be requested to conduct a medical exam if abuse is reported within 72 hours of when it occurred to collect evidence and evaluate the child. A less invasive exam may be conducted if more than 72 hours has passed. The child is always assessed for STD's, pregnancy, and to document trauma. Most importantly, these exams help to reassure the child that his or her body is okay.

The Therapist: A therapist helps to decide how the abuse has affected the child and family and what can be done to assist them in healing from the experience. Additionally, the therapist provides research-based counseling services to aid in healing from the trauma.

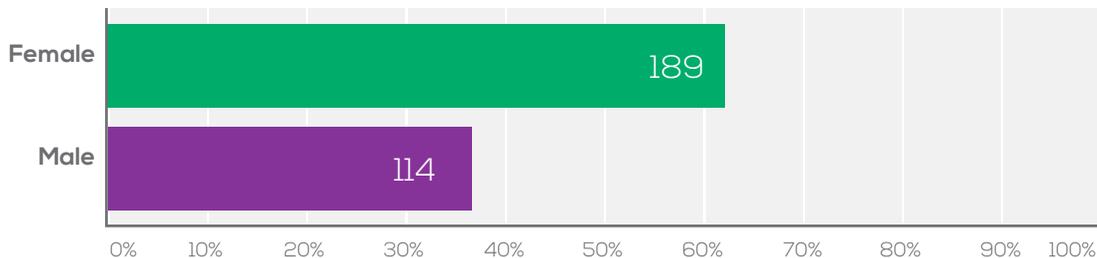
The Child and Family Advocate: A child family advocate is a trained professional who helps the caregiver to connect with services in the community, provides education, and emotional support as the caregiver protects the child in the aftermath of the abuse report.



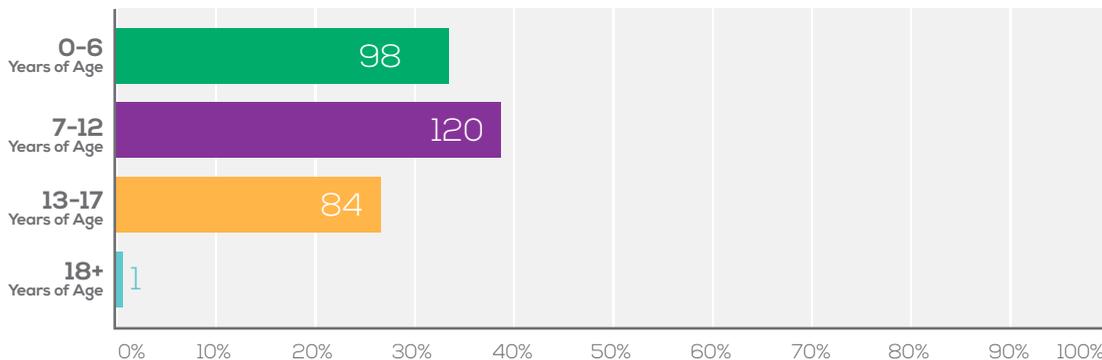
Art is not always about pretty things. It's about who we are, what happened to us, and how our lives are affected.

-Elizabeth Brown

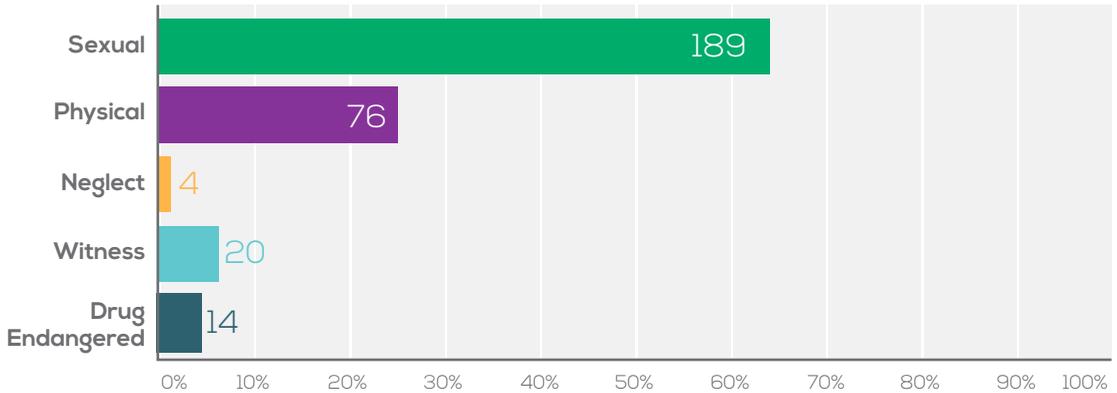
GENDER OF VICTIMS



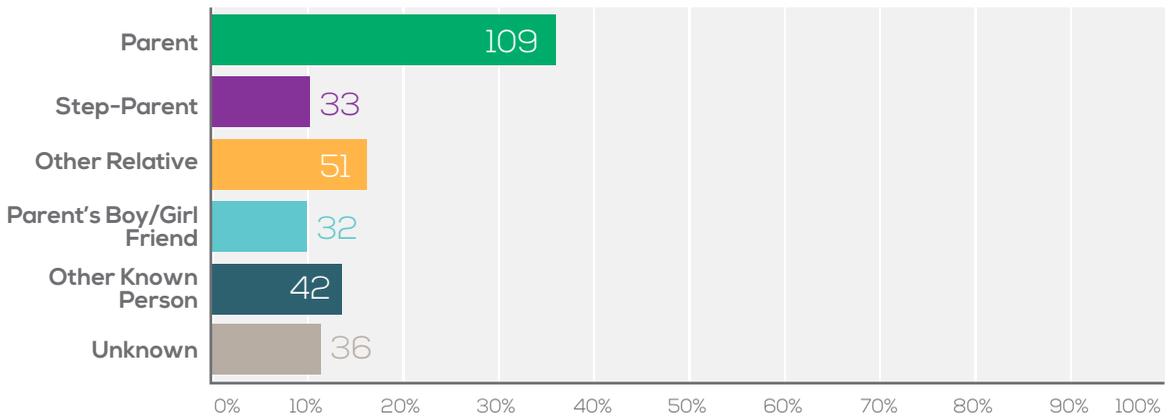
AGE OF VICTIMS



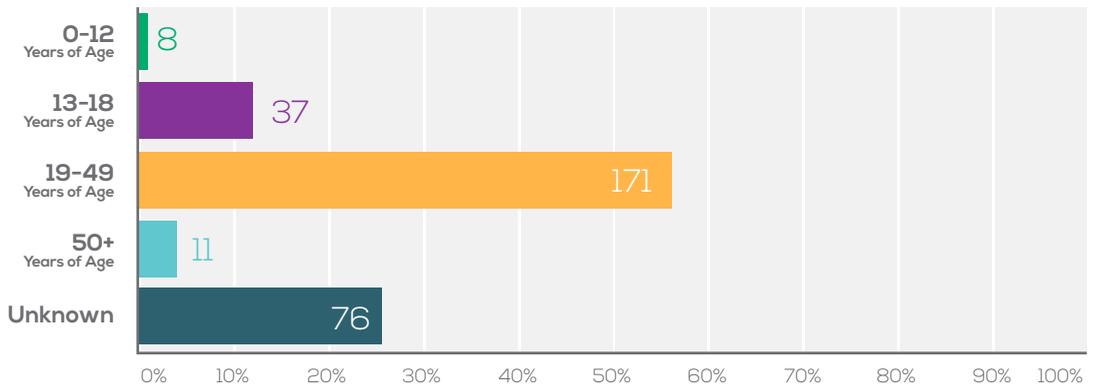
TYPES OF ABUSE



RELATION OF SUSPECT



AGE OF SUSPECTS



Year in Review

January

Casper man, Michael Andrews, 39, sentenced to eight years for molesting a 6-year-old girl multiple times while she slept more than eight years ago. The girl told her counselor at her junior high that Andrews had inappropriately touched her at least three times while she slept in the home they shared.

February

Two Casper police officers, Todd Wells and Laura Starnes-Wells, face criminal charges related to alleged ill treatment of their adopted children. The criminal investigation began after the couple's adopted daughter told a school official that Laura "had battered her" and that the slapping had "occurred her whole life." The school official noticed the girl had a partially black eye and a swollen lip. In November 2017, Laura pleaded guilty to mental and physical abuse of the child.

March

Casper man, Brian Bass, 25, was sentenced to a maximum 15 years in prison for sexually abusing a 13-year-old girl. The girl told police that she met Bass through a phone app called Whisper and the two started talking. The two arranged to meet at Washington Park, where Bass picked the girl up in his truck and sexually assaulted her.

May

Natrona County man, Aaron Rushing, 38, pleads guilty to four felonies, admitting he raped a 12 year-old girl and possessed child porn. Child pornography and sexually explicit images showed Rushing sexually abusing a girl he was related to.

May

Casper man faces two felonies for allegedly sexually assaulting a young girl. Prosecutors charged Alan Farley with one count of second-degree sexual abuse of a minor and one count of incest in April for allegedly sexually abusing a girl he was related to.

June

Casper man, Samson Dean Emerson, 34, pleads guilty to one of 16 felony charges for allegedly repeatedly recently molesting a girl and raping a woman in 2010. The girl estimated he molested her 10 to 15 times in the Bar Nunn home where she lived. The investigators spoke with a woman who had previously been in a relationship with Emerson, saying he once raped her after knocking her unconscious during a fight.

June

The Children's Advocacy Project joined the District Attorney, the Self Help Center, Wyoming Medical Center, and the Police Department in a Sexual Assault Forum to educate the community on how sexual assault cases are investigated and prosecuted, as well as opening dialog about solutions, actions, plans, and the way forward.

June

Casper woman, Sonya Smiley, sentenced to up to 20 years for grooming teen to perform sexual acts. The young girl said she was forced to take her clothes off and perform sexual acts on Sonya's husband Lenard. The couple called the girl names and treated her like a dog – forcing her to wear a collar.

July

The Children's Advocacy Project helped host and received proceeds from the Casper premier of *Mahjong and the West*. The film, written by Casper native Alyssa Carpenter, was shot in Wyoming and follows the story of two victims of childhood sexual assault who are reunited in adulthood and are forced to confront a shared trauma from their past.

July

Joshua McCullough, a Natrona County man convicted of multiple sexual crimes will serve up to 75 years in prison. He faced 26 felonies for allegedly sexually assaulting four girls and a woman since 2011. McCullough told investigators that, from the time one of the girls was 8 until she was 11 years old, he had sex with her 40-50 times.

July

Casper resident, Brandtly Bedsaul, 20, charged with raping and attempting to murder a 4-year-old girl, pleaded guilty and will serve 60 years to life for attempted murder and another 40 to 50 years for first-degree sexual abuse of a minor. Bedsaul will likely live out the rest of his life in prison.

August

A Natrona County man, Jason Lee Park, pleaded guilty to one count of third-degree sexual abuse of a minor, admitting he had sent sexually explicit text messages to a minor. He had sent images of his genitalia to a teenage girl and asked for photos of her.

August

Cheyenne mother, Sabrina Sawicki, 25, faces murder charges in the death of her 16-month-old. An autopsy determined the boy died from "abusive head trauma" consistent with "shaken baby syndrome."

October

Casper man, Hugo Mendoza-Cota pleaded guilty to six charges of sexual abuse of a minor (three in the second degree and three in the third degree) after sexually abusing two family members. The plea includes prison time and deportation. He is awaiting a ruling regarding the terms of the plea. If the plea is not accepted, this case will go to trial in 2018. Mendoza-Cota could face more than 100 years in prison if found guilty of all charges.

December

Police arrest 31-year-old Wyoming woman suspected of throwing her 2-month-old daughter into a ditch from her car, causing serious injuries. Lillian Jeffery was arrested for alleged child abuse and child endangerment.

2017 Events

CAP, Cabernet & Calcutta

420 Attended Event
63 Silent Auction Items
7 Live Auction Items

Shoot Trap for CAP

18 Heavy Hitter Teams
8 Rec League Teams
130 Total Shooters

2017 Total Raised:

\$61,240.00





Thanks to your support, we are able to provide children with the valuable services they need to heal from child abuse and we are that much closer to creating a community that better responds to and prevents child abuse.

thank you





Art *speaks* where
words are unable
to explain.



Annual Budget

FUNDING SOURCES	
VOCA Federal Funding	\$158,311.00
Natrona County and City of Casper	\$75,000.00
Program Income	\$68,000.00
Fundraising	\$58,000.00
Wyoming Community Foundation	\$50,000.00
Other City & County Funds	\$41,140.00
McMurry Foundation	\$40,000.00
United Way	\$40,000.00
Community Action Partnership	\$17,000.00
Donations	\$15,000.00
National Children's Alliance	\$7,000.00
	\$569,451.00

EXPENSES	
Salaries & Benefits	63.6%
Contract Services	15.9%
Advertising, Website, Education	3.8%
Training & Travel	3.6%
Accounting	3.0%
Building (Utilities, Phone, Internet, Insurance, Housekeeping)	2.9%
Equipment & Supplies	2.9%
Meetings, Memberships, Dues	1.5%
Legal Services	1.5%
Printing & Postage	1.3%
	100%



Thanks to our donors for helping to *create* brighter futures.

2nd Street Liquor & Wine
All Creatures Veterinary Hospital
ANB Bank
Andrea Gomez / Advocare
Artisan Alley
Aspen Creek Massage
Backwards Distillery
Bath & Body Works
Big Horn Polo Club
Big O Tires
Blimpies
Braces U Orthodontics
Brad & Natalia Follensbee
Brattis Meat Market
Brilliantly Bri
Brush 44 Designs
Cadillac Cowgirl
Casper Animal Medical
Casper Events Center
Casper Fire Fighters
Casper Fitness Co-Op
Central Wyoming
 Counseling Center
CJ Sound
Clareesa Zook, CMT
Cloud Peak
Cold Stone Creamery
Complete Nutrition
Computer Logic
Corner Upholstery
Crazy Pedaler
Dancing Sheep Yarn & Fibre
Decker Auto Glass
Denver Museum of
 Nature & Science
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Durbin Street Golf

El Marko Lanes
Exploding Pill Taxidermy
Firerock
First Interstate Bank
Flannigan's Furniture
Floral Rhino
FOP Platte River Lodge #11
Foss Motors
Frosted Tops
Fusion Fitness
Gail Zimmerman
Garret Scarince
Gear Up & Get Out
Girl In Air
GNC
Grabar Voice & Data
Grant Street Grocery
Great Harvest Bread Company
Guadalajara
Hair of the Dog
Hampton Inn & Suites Riverton
Hilltop National Bank
Holiday Inn McMurry Park
Holiday Inn Sheridan
HQBBQ
Huber Plumbing & Heating
Jackson Hole Golf
Jade Elephant Beads
Jamie Morales
Janet Zambai
Jeffrey's Bistro
Jennifer Schieck
John Lichty and Jennifer Gladson
Just Breathe
Kalico Kat Quilt Shop
Keefe's Flowers
Kids Works
Kilmer & Associates
Kimberly Mittelstadt
Lander Country Club

Lead Country Club
Life's Moments Photography
Lifetime Health &
 Fitness Center
LIV Hospitality
Living Well, LLC
Mercer Family Resource Center
Michael & Eva Zimmerman
Murdochs
Nate's Flowers
NStyle Nails and Spa
Om On the Range
Outback Steakhouse
Papa Murphy's
Paradise Valley Country Club
Peak Asset Managers
Platte Valley Bank
Pottery By You
Qdoba
Quinn & Kayleigh Clark
Ramkota Hotel Center
Raven Beattie
Rib & Chop House
Riddles
Ridley's Market East
Rocky Mountain
 Discount Sports
Rootz Salon
Rose Fry
Rosemary Bartle & Tara Fairbanks
Salon Savvy
Sams Club
Saratoga Resort & Spa
Shannon Green Photography
Sherrie's Place
Shirts & More
Sierra West
Silver Fox Steakhouse
Sit Means Sit
SM Energy

SNS Outfitters & Guide Service
Southern Flare Lash
Stacey Mittelstadt
Starbucks East
Stirling Skin Care
Sunsations Tanning Salon
Surf Wyoming
T Bee S Pollination
Tara Ashcraft at Salon 307
Texas Roadhouse
The Crowbar & Grill
The Family Clinic
The Flour Bin
The Great Untamed
Wines & Meads
The Spence Law Firm
Thrive Therapeutic Massage, LLC
Tomahawk Lake Country Club
Total Elegance Boutique
Toy Town
Ugly Bug/Crazy Rainbow
Uncorked
Wagner's Outdoor Outfitters
Walmart
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Western Divers LTD

White's Mountain Motors
Whitney Schilling
WIDC-Frontier CDC
Wind City Books
Wind City Physical Therapy
Wind River Casino
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Wyoming Anglers
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& Interiors
YMCA
Yumwiches
Zimmerman Family Foundation





If you would like to make a donation or if you have any questions about our services, please contact us:
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