



# Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County

## **The Mid-Month Memo**

Vol. 4, Issue 6  
February 13, 2015

*Diana Schunn*  
Executive Director

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Jessica Suhr  
Attorney, Kansas Legal Services

Juston White, Boys and Girls Club  
of South Central Kansas

### **Primary Partner Agencies**

COMCARE of Sedgwick County  
Exploited and Missing Child Unit  
KS Dept. for Children and Families  
Wichita Regional Office  
KU School of Medicine - Wichita  
Office of the District Attorney, 18th  
Judicial District, Sedgwick County  
Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office  
Via Christi Health  
Wesley Medical Center  
Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center  
Wichita Police Department

*~ To lead our community in eliminating the  
suffering of abused children. ~*

### **Introducing Our Board Members**

**Jessica Suhr** is a staff attorney at Kansas Legal Services, a non-profit law firm dedicated to representing low income Kansans. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from the University of San Diego, followed by a Juris Doctor from the University of Kansas. She is an active member of the Junior League of Wichita and has previously served on the Board of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). Through her employment and volunteer work in the community, Jessica sees the need for the CACSC and is excited to be a member of this Board of Directors.

**Jeff Mullen** is Chief Financial Officer for Dondlinger and Sons Construction Co., Inc. Jeff has held positions with other non-profit organizations and is currently an adjunct professor at a local university. After earning a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Accounting, and a Master's in Accounting Information Systems at the University of Kansas, Jeff received a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Jeff believes that the CACSC provides a valuable and necessary role in ensuring the community's most precious and vulnerable members are protected and represented.

### **For Your Calendar**

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and National Sexual Assault Awareness Month: check website for activities.

April 23-24, 2015: 18th Annual Crime Victims' Rights Conference, Hyatt Regency, Wichita

May 4, 2015: "Change A Child's Life," Golf Tournament, Willowbend Country Club (date and location change)

October 30, 2015: Heroes Gala, Scottish Rite Center.

### **Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County**

130 S. Market, Ste. B183, Wichita, KS 67202-3850  
Phone: 316-660-9494, or visit us online: [www.cacsckansas.org](http://www.cacsckansas.org)

## ***Talking to Your Children About Sexual Abuse***

No parent wants to even consider the possibility their child could be a victim of child molestation and we wish it would never happen to any child, but statistics indicate otherwise. Girls have a 1 in 4 chance, and boys a 1 in 6 chance of being molested before the age of 18. Parents cannot risk being uninformed about this reality. The conversation with your child about sexual abuse should be just as important as the ones you have about traffic safety. How do you approach the conversation?

- Talk about it from the perspective of sharing your love for your child, not your fear. The conversation should be in a calm environment. If you are frightened or stressed, your child will feel fear and not listen to your words.
- Begin at 2 or 3 years of age by teaching the actual names of private parts, including both female and male anatomy. This gives your child the right words to use if he needs to tell someone about getting hurt or touched.
- Explain when your child's private parts can be seen or touched - generally, no one should see or touch the parts of the body covered by a swimsuit or underwear unless that person is keeping her clean, safe or healthy (e.g., helping with a bath or getting a check-up at the doctor's office). Even then, make certain your child knows to tell you if she does not like what someone is doing.
- Avoid creating a taboo or "nasty" feeling about sexuality. Molestation can arouse "tingly" or pleasant sensations, which can confuse a child, but it's not the child's fault if someone is touching him. It's also important that your child knows to tell you if someone asks him to touch the private parts of another person.
- Empower your child with the right to control her body and respond to her "gut" instinct. Give her permission to say "no" to any adult if she's uncomfortable with a request. Even hugs, family kisses or back rubs should not be forced on a child. As the parent, support her feelings, even verbally if necessary. A child's sense of safety should come before "politeness." Adults should first ask for permission from a child before hugging or other physical contact.
- Help your child understand the difference between keeping good secrets (e.g., birthday presents) and bad secrets. Explain that anyone who asks your child to keep a secret from his parents should not be trusted and that it's okay to tell.
- Tell your child you will believe her if she tells you someone is hurting her and that she won't be in trouble for telling.

These conversations should be open, casual, ongoing and a component of honest, nurturing and consistent parenting, so your child can trust you and feel safe.

If you suspect child abuse or neglect call 911 or 1.800.922.5330

**"The purpose of child advocacy centers is to provide a comprehensive, culturally competent, multidisciplinary team response to reports of child abuse, in a dedicated, child-focused setting."**

**National Children's Alliance**

**Empowering Local Communities to Serve Child Victims of Abuse**