



the advocate's

Voice

The quarterly newsletter for the Child Advocacy Center

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Points of Interest

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October 2009

Brian Wasson

Brian is a member of the CAPstone Board of Directors. He has lived in the valley his entire life with exception of a four year tour in the United States Marine Corps.

He represents law enforcement on the Board and has been a police officer with the City of Scottsbluff Police Department for 12 years. As a Scottsbluff Police Officer he has been assigned patrol officer, investigator, patrol supervisor and is currently the Support Services Captain for the department.

Throughout his career he has had the opportunity to investigate numerous allegations of crimes against children, and as a father has an interest in the safety of children in the community. Law enforcement is appreciative of the resources provided by the CAPstone Child Advocacy Center. He says he will remain interested in assisting in the development of CAPstone and its resources provided to those interested in ensuring the safety of children in Scotts Bluff County and throughout the Panhandle.



Jeanne McKerrigan

Jeanne was born in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She graduated from Scottsbluff High School in 1988 and is a proud recipient of an Associate of Applied Science degree in Office Technology from Western Nebraska Community College, as well as, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business/Accounting from Chadron State College. Her career with U.S. Bank began on April 1, 1996 as an Administrative Assistant in the Business Banking Department and over the last thirteen years she has advanced within the company to the position of President for the Scottsbluff, Gering and Torrington markets. She has been married to her husband, Sean, for 19 years. For several years, they had the opportunity to be foster parents for children within the community. After three years of having two sibling boys in their home, they became the proud parents of Adrian and Andrew. The boys are now eight and nine years old and have a bigger social life than Jeanne and Sean. Jeanne's outside interests include actively volunteering in the Community as a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate for Abused Children), treasurer for Capstone (Interview Center for Abused Children), YMCA Board of Director, United Way Co-chair, Scottsbluff/Gering Rotary member and volunteer for the Scottsbluff/Gering Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors. Shopping, jigsaw puzzles, reading, exercising and traveling are some of her passions.



CAC 101
(or WHAT DID YOU SAY THE CAC DOES?)

CHILD ADVOCACY STANDARD: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM FOR RESPONSE TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS INCLUDES REPRESENTATION FROM THE FOLLOWING:

- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
- PROSECUTION
- MEDICAL
- MENTAL HEALTH
- VICTIM ADVOCACY
- CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

A functioning and effective multidisciplinary team approach (MDT) is the foundation of a CAC.

An MDT is a group of professionals who represent various disciplines and work collaboratively from the point of report to assure the most effective coordinated response possible for every child. The purpose of interagency collaboration is to coordinate intervention so as to reduce potential trauma to children and families and improve services, while preserving and respecting the rights and obligations of each agency to pursue their respective mandates. This interagency collaboration is based on a system response and not just on the facility. Collaborative response begins with case initiation and is promoted through understanding and exploring case issues. Insight from each MDT representative provides the environment for a coordinated, comprehensive, compassionate professional response. Quality assurance is a necessary component of this joint response to review the effectiveness of the collaborative efforts.

Six disciplines; law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, medical, mental health, victim advocacy, together with CAC staff, comprise the core MDT. Some CACs, including those in small, rural communities, may employ one person to fill multiple roles. For example, the CAC Director may also serve as the Victim Advocate or a CPS worker may function as an interviewer and a case worker. Community resources may limit personnel and require some to wear multiple hats. What is important is that each of the above-mentioned functions be performed by a member of the MDT while maintaining clear boundaries for each function. MDT's may also expand to include other professionals, such as guardians ad litem, adult and juvenile probation, dependency (civil) attorneys, out-of-home care licensing personnel, federal investigators, school personnel, domestic violence providers and others, as needed and appropriate for that community.

Generally, a coordinated, MDT approach facilitates efficient gathering and sharing of information, broadens the knowledge base with which decisions are made by including information from many sources, and improves communication among agencies. From each agency's perspective, there are also benefits to working on an MDT. More thorough and shared information, improved and timely evidence gathering, and the involvement of the prosecutor from the beginning stages of the case may contribute to a more successful outcome. An MDT response also fosters needed education, support and treatment for children and families that may enhance their willingness to participate and their ability to be effective witnesses. MDT interventions, particularly when provided in a neutral, child-focused CAC setting, are associated with less anxiety, fewer interviews, increased support, and more appropriate and timely referrals for needed services. In addition, non-offending parents are empowered to protect and support their children throughout the investigation and prosecution and beyond. Law enforcement personnel find that a suspect may be more likely to cooperate when confronted with the strength of the evidence generated by a coordinated MDT approach. Law enforcement personnel also appreciate that support and advocacy functions are attended to, leaving them more time to focus on other aspects of the investigation. They work more effectively with CPS on child protection issues and benefit from other MDT members' training and expertise in communicating with children and understanding family dynamics. As a result of effective information sharing, CPS workers are often in a better position to make recommendations regarding placement, visitation and can assist the MDT by monitoring the child's safety and parental support, and evaluating non-offending parents. Medical providers benefit from the MDT's complete history taking and, in turn, are available to consult about the advisability of a specialized medical evaluation and the interpretation of medical findings and reports. Mental health professionals can provide the MDT with valuable information regarding the child's emotional state and treatment needs and ability to participate in the criminal justice process. A mental health professional on the MDT helps ensure that assessment and treatment and related services are more routinely offered and made available to children and families. Victim advocacy personnel are available to provide needed crisis intervention, support, information and case updates, and advocacy in a timely fashion. This helps the MDT anticipate and respond to the needs of children and their families more effectively, lessens the stress of the court process, and increases access to resources needed by the family which may include access to victims of crime funding.

Standards:

The CAC/MDT has a written interagency agreement signed by authorized representatives of all MDT components that clearly commits the signed parties to the CAC model for its multidisciplinary child abuse intervention response.

All members of the MDT including appropriate CAC staff, as defined by the needs of the case, are routinely involved in investigations and/or MDT interventions.

The CAC/MDT's written documents address information sharing that ensures the timely exchange of relevant information among MDT members, staff, and volunteers and is consistent with legal, ethical and professional standards of practice.

The CAC provides routine opportunities for MDT members to provide feedback and suggestions regarding procedures/operations of the CAC/MDT.

The CAC/MDT participates in ongoing and relevant training and educational opportunities, including cross-discipline, MDT, peer review and skills-based learning.

(From: National Children's Alliance "Standards for Accredited Members: Revised 2008")

Box Butte County 1184 Teams

This team is represented by:
County Attorney: KJ Hutchinson
Law Enforcement
Health and Human Services
Medical
Probation Officer
Alliance Public Schools
Hemingford Public Schools
Nebraska Boys Ranch
Boys and Girls Home
Family Rescue Services
WCHR
Mental Health
Head Start, Early Head Start
Early Childhood Development

The Box Butte County Investigation Team and The Treatment Team meet on a monthly basis under the leadership of County Attorney KJ Hutchinson. Alliance is in the process of setting up a SART team. SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) is a victim-sensitive program designed to provide a team approach to sexual assaults. The team consist of a nurse examiner who provides a forensic evidentiary examination and medical support, a law enforcement officer, who conducts an investigation and provides emergency assistance, and a victim advocate, who is there to provide emotional support to the victim.

Alliance satellite office should be up and running soon.

We're on the web!
www.capstonenebraska.com
Check us out!

Welcome our new
Administrative Assistant
Anna Adams



National Night Out



Board members and staff from CAPstone worked hard on the lemonade stand for the National Night Out. It was estimated that approximately 700 cups of lemonade were given away. Donations were estimated at about \$85 to \$90. We would like to thank Brian Wasson's two girls for helping us out - thanks girls. Also we would like to thank Home Depot for the supplies to build the stand, Monica and Kathy for building it, and Wal-Mart for the lemonade supplies.

1st Annual Light of Hope Breakfast

The Light of Hope breakfast for CASA and CAPstone programs put money in the bank for both programs and brought tears to a few eyes.

An estimated 175 people attended the breakfast at the Scottsbluff County Club.

Thanks to all who made this a great success.



Up Coming Trainings



A Multidisciplinary Approach to Child
Death Investigation and Medical Child
Abuse

Friday, October 2, 2009

8 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Omaha, Nebraska

Victim Offender Dialogue A Process
for Helping Crime

Victims Heal

October 5th and 6th, 2009

Omaha, Nebraska

2ND ANNUAL JASON VESPER MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC

August 22, 2009

What a great tournament!

CAPstone received \$6062

Thanks to all who participated

A big thanks to the Vesper family
for all their hard work.

The winning team shot 58 and won in a
Scorecard Playoff:

Bryan Broberg
Mike Clark
Bob Hodges
Justin King

