



Child Advocacy Center

FY2024 Annual Report

July 2023 – June 2024



Children's Hospital
of The King's Daughters



The Child Advocacy Center at Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters offers a variety of services after child maltreatment is suspected. The program receives referrals from child protective services and law enforcement agencies throughout southeast Virginia and northeast North Carolina. This year, the Child Advocacy Center provided care to 2,742 children and their families to help them heal and recover from child abuse and neglect. This is a 4% increase from the previous year.

Our team provides medical and mental health services, forensic interviews, case management, and family advocacy services. In addition, we work closely with investigative agencies to provide education and training and lead the Hampton Roads Trauma Informed Community Network.

New Medical Director

The Child Advocacy Center welcomed a new medical director in May 2024. Dr. Deborah Lowen, with more than 25 years of experience as a child abuse pediatrician, comes to CHKD from Tennessee, where she most recently served as the Deputy Commissioner of Child Health for the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services. Dr. Lowen was formerly the head of the child maltreatment program at the Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt, where she built a team of clinicians and provided education within the medical center and in the community.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Program

The Child Advocacy Center helped 284 children through the CSEC program this year – a 20.6% increase from last year. In addition, Daisy Schuurman, the CSEC program coordinator, was recognized by Jason Miyares, Virginia’s attorney general, at the 2024 Unsung Heroes Award Ceremony for Virginians, a recognition of individuals who provide exemplary service and support to victims of crime.

Service Expansion

The Child Advocacy Center’s mental health team recently began a year-long training to implement the Problematic Sexualized Behavior Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – Young Children (PSB-CBT) treatment modality. Currently unavailable elsewhere in our region, this needed treatment expands our mental health services to address these problematic behaviors.

With support from the City of Norfolk, we began crisis intervention services to help meet the immediate needs of children and families presenting with risky behaviors or other high-risk concerns by reducing the severity of trauma symptoms, decreasing the need for hospitalizations, and improving the family’s overall experience of program services.

CHKD’s Child Advocacy Center services are available in three locations to improve access to care for families. The main program is in Norfolk, with additional offices in Newport News and Virginia Beach. This year our team began offering medical services at our Newport News office to improve access to care for our families on the Peninsula.

Multidisciplinary Teams

Every jurisdiction has their own policies and protocols to follow when investigating child abuse and neglect cases, making it essential to work closely with those involved in the child’s case. A formal memorandum of understanding was developed with Gloucester County, bringing our formalized multidisciplinary team total to nine city jurisdictions with another three military teams. The twelve teams meet regularly to coordinate a response to a child’s disclosure of maltreatment that can reduce harm, support healing, and provide more seamless services.

Hampton Roads Trauma Informed Care Network (HRTICN)

The Child Advocacy Center is the backbone agency of the HRTICN, which serves to promote the understanding of how trauma affects individuals and communities and to advocate practices that help all people reach their potential. Together with Horizons of Hampton Roads, HRTICN hosted a screening of Sextortion, a documentary that merges true crime with an empowering educational opportunity to help families keep their children safe on the internet. CHKD and HRTICN also hosted an evening of HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) at the Chrysler Museum, which included spoken and visual art and performances by local teens.

HRTICN also hosted a free, two-part trauma and resilience training facilitated by John Richardson-Lauve, LCSW, senior director of community outreach and trauma-informed care specialist with St. Joseph's Villa in Richmond. A three-hour virtual training on the basics of trauma and resilience was followed by a two-day, in-person, trauma and resilience train the trainer class.

Community Outreach

During Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, program staff participated in several awareness events, including a walk around CHKD's main campus, a walk with the City of Norfolk, a pinwheel planting with Biker's Against Child Abuse at the Salvation Army's Kroc Center in Norfolk, and a victim's rights ceremony in Chesapeake.

The Center also participated in the City of Norfolk's Safer Together, Violence Reduction and Prevention Summit at the Chrysler Museum, and provided Virginia Congresswoman Jen Kiggans a tour of the Child Advocacy Center. Program staff met with Commonwealth's Attorneys from across Hampton Roads to provide an overview of the program and explain how forensic interviews and medical services are used during an open investigation.

Funding

This year, the Child Advocacy Center spent more than \$4.5 million providing needed services. Because much of this care is not reimbursed, philanthropy, grant funding, and municipality support are critical to these programs, many of which are not available elsewhere in Hampton Roads.

FY2024 Annual Utilization

The information on the following page outlines program activity for the year (July 2023 through June 2024).

CHKD Child Advocacy Center FY2024 Patients by Residence		CHKD Child Advocacy Center FY2024 Services Provided	
Locality	Patients Served	Services Provided	Total
Chesapeake	330	Mental Health Screenings	762
Eastern Shore of Virginia	64	Mental Health Services	3,504
Gloucester County	54	Medical Services	1,575
Hampton	198	Forensic Interviews	986
Isle of Wight County	50	Victim/Family Advocacy Services	13,107
James City County	76	Subpoenas Received	530
Mathews County	8	Court Testimony Provided	42
Newport News	275	Reduction in Trauma Symptoms*	85%
Norfolk	519	Multidisciplinary Meetings	105
Portsmouth	214	Facility Dog Visits	333
Suffolk	142		
Virginia Beach	536		
Williamsburg	2		
York County/Poquoson	86		
Other Locations Served	188		
Total	2,742		

**This figure is the percentage of children exhibiting a non-clinical score for trauma symptoms at the end of mental health treatment.*

