

CENTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION

*help. hope. healing.*



*Annual Report*

2007



# Letter from the Director

"It is not enough to stare up at the steps, we must step up the stairs." — Victor Havel

I dream a dream of peace and safety for children. I dream of a world in which each child is cherished and in which tears occur only because of bumps, bruises, and broken toys. However, I live in a world in which hundreds of children are sexually violated by someone that they love and trust. I live in a world in which children experience the most painful physical injury at the hands of those who should be safe. I work in a world of violence, tears, nightmares, and fear.

I'm working toward a world in which my dreams and my daily reality are merging. We know what will be required to stop child abuse if we are willing to step up the stairs and insist on a safe world for our children—big and small. A recent article confirms what we've known all along — that it is possible to halt the spread of child abuse. Five major obstacles that create a culture that allows child abuse to flourish remain

- Those who are required to report do not always report abuse;
- Abuse allegations which are reported are not properly investigated;
- Frontline child protection professionals are not adequately trained to intervene;
- Child abuse is not addressed when children are very young; and
- Children receive an inadequate share of financial resources to address prevention and intervention.\*

As I've long believed, the Center for Child Protection, a children's advocacy center serving Travis County, was founded to surmount each of these obstacles. With continued funding, commitment, and energy, we can eliminate child abuse for the next generation.

Why work so hard now when the elimination is so far away? For me, it's because I cannot look into the face of an 11-year-old who is pregnant and ask her to be patient. I cannot listen to the cries of an injured toddler without wanting to rage against the forces that allow such violence to exist. And so, I'll continue to dream and act in the strong belief that I have a responsibility to act... to step up to the challenge. Step up with me

Sincerely,



**Sandra A. Martin**  
Chief Executive Officer

\* Source: Vieth, V.I. 2006. "Unto the Third Generation: A Call to End Child Abuse in the United States Within 120 Years." *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 12: 5-6.



## *The Year in Review*

In 2007, there were 2,280 confirmed child victims of abuse or neglect in Travis County. The devastation brought to each of these families is unimaginable. But, with the help and hope offered at the Center for Child Protection, a brighter tomorrow is possible.

Eight-year-old Vicky\* was brought to the Center to talk to someone about the time her mother's boyfriend molested her. In 2007, 653 children came to the Center for a forensic interview. Sharing with a trusted adult what happened to them is often the starting point in the healing process for abused children.

Twelve-year-old Trenton\* had horrible nightmares after witnessing his mother's brutal rape. Along with his little brother, Trenton and his mother came to the Center to receive therapy. In 2007, 1,250 therapy sessions at the Center helped families work through the aftermath of a traumatizing experience.

Five-year-old Rosa\* was beaten by her babysitter. When she came to the Center, a forensic interviewer spoke with her in Spanish to understand exactly what happened. In 2007, the number of interviews done in Spanish increased by 40 percent. Accessing services in their native language will help Spanish speaking families recover from an outcry of abuse.

\* Not their real names

# Profile of Children Served

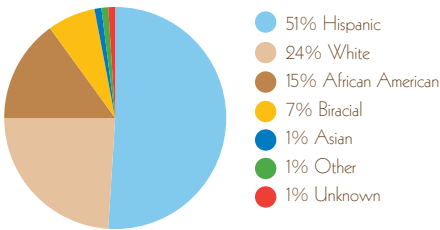
In 2007, the Center for Child Protection provided 2,880 services to 1,476 children and 2,330 services to 980 protective caregivers. A total of 653 children were brought to the Center for a forensic interview. A majority (65%) of the children came to the Center because of sexual abuse, while fewer (16%) were referred as a result of witnessing a violent crime. The remainder of children were brought to the Center due to physical abuse (14%), multiple abuses (3%), or other (2%). Seventy percent of cases were joint investigations with law enforcement and Child Protective Services.

Though 51 percent of caregivers reported an income below the federal poverty line, the children who were referred to the Center came from across the city and surrounding county, from affluent, poor, urban, and rural areas. Twenty-four percent of cases seen reported a domestic violence history. Families were provided all services free of charge.

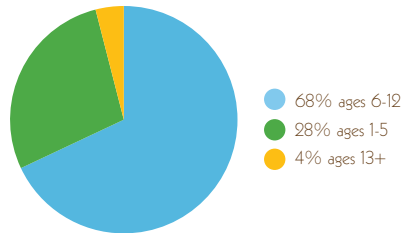
## Profile of the Offenders

In 2007, children reported that 89 percent of perpetrators were people they knew. Of the offenders reported, a majority were male (88%) and age 17 and above (70%).

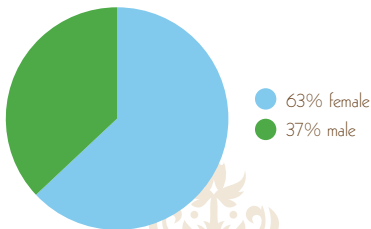
Race/Ethnicity of Children Interviewed: 2007



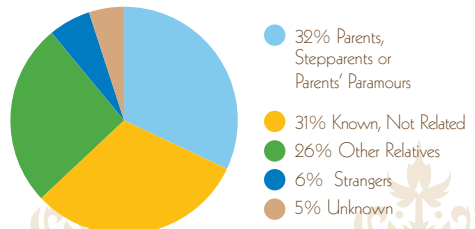
Age of Children Interviewed: 2007



Gender of Children Interviewed: 2007



Offenders' Relationship to the Child: 2007



# Children & Family Services

## Forensic Interview

Children are brought to the Center by law enforcement or Child Protective Services to begin the investigation process. A forensic interview is conducted in a child-friendly and legally-sound manner and is recorded onto DVD, thus eliminating the need for repeated statements and reducing the trauma to children.

## Medical Exam

Children affected by chronic sexual abuse are scheduled to receive a forensic exam, conducted by the Center's highly trained pediatrician. Often, evidence collected during these exams is used during criminal proceedings.

## Therapy

Therapy and counseling services are critical to recovery after an outcry of abuse is made. Services in both English and Spanish help children and families process their experiences and heal from the abuse they endured.

## Family Advocate Program

The Family Advocate program provides parents and protective caregivers with immediate crisis intervention, ongoing case management, therapy, and follow-up, so caregivers have the support they need to care for their children, family, and themselves.

## Intensive Case Management

Intensive case management supports at-risk families one-on-one to prevent child abuse or neglect. The Center's clinical staff makes home visits to assess a child's developmental needs and to provide support with complex medical requirements.

## Protective Parenting Group

The Protective Parenting Group is a 10-week class that most parents are court-ordered to attend because of involvement with Child Protective Services. The group, offered in English and Spanish, addresses issues related to trauma, family dynamics, and child protection







### Sexual Abuse Dynamics Group

The Sexual Abuse Dynamics Group is a 7-week class that gives protective caregivers in-depth information about sexual abuse dynamics within the family. Parents who attend gain the ability to more effectively support their child as well as meet their own emotional needs after an outcry of abuse.

### Parent Education Class

Parent Education class is a 7-week class that shares information about child development, communication skills, child misbehavior, conflict resolution, and appropriate discipline.

### Court School

Each month, the Center hosts a Court School program that orients children and families to court proceedings. Conducted by a forensic interviewer in a Travis County Court House, volunteers role-play the various characters in a court room and children practice relaxation techniques while telling the truth as a witness. Real cases are not discussed.

### Emergency Funds

The Center provides emergency funds for children and families in crisis. Expenditures are designed to be short-term in nature with a long-term impact on child safety. For example, food, clothing, cab fare, and help with utilities are all types of purchases made with emergency funds.



# Kozmetsky Center

## Progress on the new Kozmetsky Center for Child Protection

In April 2007, the Center for Child Protection successfully met a challenge grant and completed a \$9.1 million capital campaign to build the Kozmetsky Center for Child Protection. Incredible progress to construct the building was made in 2007 with scheduled move-in set for Spring 2008. The new Kozmetsky Center for Child Protection, located in East Austin, is more than four times the current facility's size and will enable expanded services for child abuse victims up to age 21 and their families.

The new Kozmetsky building will provide space for many new resources and programs for children. Five forensic interview rooms will enable five interviews of children to occur concurrently. An expanded therapy wing will accommodate children and adults attending individual therapy, play therapy, and a variety of therapeutic groups without interfering with other services.

A separate medical wing will provide sexual abuse and physical abuse examination along with expanded medical services for victims. A clothes and resource closet maintained by volunteers will be available for children who need clothing, toiletries, and other supplies.







## *Volunteers*

### **Volunteers**

In 2007, more than 160 volunteers provided almost 10,000 hours of service, valued at over \$180,000. The generosity of our volunteers' time and talent meant that children and families could continue receiving services at the Center's child-friendly facility free of charge. Volunteers participated in many capacities, both direct service and administrative. From greeting families upon their first visit to the Center, to coloring and making crafts with children, to playing a defense attorney during Court School, and helping fundraise at Center events—volunteers truly have made the difference of excellence in Center services this year.

### **The Friends of Christopher Guild**

The Friends of Christopher Guild is a sustaining volunteer membership organization dedicated to expanding the safety net for abused children. Founded in 1992, this diverse group of women assists the Center through fundraising and direct services to children and families. In 2007, the Guild held their fourth annual PlayBingo fundraiser in October, which raised awareness and over \$93,000 to support the Center's services. Additionally, the Guild sponsored the 16th Annual Lexus Car Raffle, which raised over \$139,000. A new fundraising addition in 2007 was the first-ever Domain PlayBingo Shopping Extravaganza, held in August.

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The Center is a founding member of the **National Children's Alliance**, a founding member of the **Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc.**, a project of the **Junior League of Austin**, and a **United Way Capital Area Partner Agency**.

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### **Child Protection Team Members**

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CENTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION  
*help. hope. healing.*



The Center for Child Protection, a nationally accredited children's advocacy center, is the first stop for children in Travis County who are suspected victims of sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and for children who have witnessed a violent crime. The Center is a child-friendly, specially equipped facility where children go for recorded forensic interviews, medical exams, counseling and intervention during the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. All services are provided to children and their protective caregivers at no charge. The Center for Child Protection's mission is to reduce the trauma for children during the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases.



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Ph: 512-472-1164 | Fx: 512-472-1167  
[www.centerforchildprotection.org](http://www.centerforchildprotection.org)

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Special thanks to **The MOD Studio** and **McCarthy Print** for helping produce this report.