



Press Release

For Immediate Release
Friday, November 06, 2009
11:51 AM

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Family Service Agency's, Children's Advocacy Center Receives Accreditation – Open House Planned

An open house is planned for Monday, November 16, 2009, 4:30 PM – 6 PM at Family Service Agency of DeKalb County, 14 Health Services Drive, DeKalb, IL, celebrating the accreditation of the local agency's Children's Advocacy Center program by the National Children's Alliance (NCA).

Susan Plote, Executive Director of the Family Service Agency announced today that the Family Service Agency's, Children's Advocacy Center has been accepted as an accredited member of National Children's Alliance (NCA), joining over 450 other member programs across the United States.

The Children's Advocacy Center is dedicated to providing help and protection to victims of abuse without causing further suffering, making their accreditation with the National Children's Alliance more than natural.

Organizations can be recommended for membership following an extensive application and site review process to determine compliance with minimum standards set by NCA. Core components include separate, child-friendly facilities for interviewing and providing services to child victims and their non-offending family members; coordinated, multidisciplinary investigation of reports of abuse; and regular interdisciplinary case review.

Attention to the needs and abilities of children is a hallmark of Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) programs and is fundamental to NCA standards. Recent research has validated the long-held belief that when interactions with children are age appropriate and provided in a supportive manner, children are more likely to provide accurate and truthful information to investigators, clinicians and other professionals, which is clearly the best interest of everyone involved in and affected by child abuse.

NCA is a sub-grantor of more than \$8 million a year in federal funds from the Department of Justice. More than 250 additional programs are in various stages of development. Together, these CAC programs are located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the United States, Virgin Islands and Canada.

Gaining national accreditation will help the Children's Advocacy Center gain government funding, receive government grants, as well as maintain private funding. "Funders looking to help support an organization want a stamp of approval. They want to know, with absolute certainty, that they are funding an organization that provides the highest possible quality of service. NCA accreditation is that stamp of approval," said Monique Heilemeier, Director of the Children's Advocacy Center. This accreditation is a good sign that the CAC's services will continue to meet community needs in the future.

Family Service Agency of DeKalb County is a premier social service agency, providing support to individuals and families throughout the lifecycle. Family Service Agency is comprised of five distinct departments – Big Brothers Big Sisters, Center for Counseling, Child Life & Family Education, Children's Advocacy Center and Senior Services Center. A host of programs are available through these departments, and all services are provided by experienced professionals.

Family Service Agency of DeKalb County accepts insurance, and scholarship and reduced fees are available for those who qualify. In some instances, services can be provided at no cost to the client. Family Service Agency's main office is located at 14 Health Services Drive, and satellite offices are located in DeKalb and Sandwich. Family Service Agency is a Kishwaukee United Way Agency. For more information about the services at Family Service Agency call 815-758-8616, 815-786-7079 in Sandwich, or visit their website at www.realsolutionstoday.org.

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