

**News Release**  
For immediate release

**March 27, 2020**

## **Zebra Child Protection Centre Supporting Kids Amid COVID-19**

*Zebra Centre still providing essential services with precautions in place*

**EDMONTON, AB** – The Zebra Child Protection Centre supported 2,362 children and youth in 2019 and during these stressful times the Zebra Centre is still providing support to those most vulnerable in our community. To be able to continue providing essential services to children, youth and their families precautions are in place to prevent the spread of illness through the following measures: thorough cleaning of our spaces after each client, staff who can be working remotely to reduce the number of people in the Centre and prescreening questions recommended by Alberta Health Services are being used. *“This is a time where the children, youth and families we serve need us most and we will continue to be there and provide the necessary supports to ensure each child and youth receives their customized care plan to begin their healing journey,”* says, Cheryl, Diebel, CEO, Zebra Child Protection Centre.

During times of stress and uncertainty an increase in cases is common, therefore it is important to remember that as a community it is our duty to report child abuse. 87% of suspects are known to the child; it is more important than ever to familiarize ourselves with how to recognize child abuse and how to report. There are three red flag areas to be aware of to help recognize child abuse: functional, emotional and behavioural patterns of a child. It is important to pay attention when a child begins to show behaviours or signs that are different from their baseline and have no reasonable explanation. Every child responds differently to abuse; therefore, these aren't absolute signs that a child is being abused, but they can be used as a potential indicator that something is happening within a child's life that needs to be explored further. The Zebra Centre is not a reporting agency, therefore reports of child abuse must first be made through one of our partner agencies: Edmonton Police Service Complaint Line: 780-423-4567, Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-387-5437 (KIDS), Crime Stoppers: 1-800-222-8477, Online Exploitation: [cybertip.ca](http://cybertip.ca), or your local police/RCMP detachment.

As a Child Advocacy Centre (CAC) we are committed to our role of keeping children and youth in our community safe. A big part of that is providing support to parents and caregivers in stressful times by providing resources that are available in the community. Everyone copes with change and stress

differently please reach out to these additional resources if you are needing assistance: Canadian Mental Health Association Edmonton Distress Line: (780) 482-4357 (HELP), 24/ 7 Help Line: (1-866) 332-2322, Adult Community Urgent Services: (780) 342-7777 which includes Adult Crisis Response Team (in-person team) and the Community Urgent Services and Stabilization Team, First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line: (1-855) 242-3310 or online chat <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca> and Northgate Health Centre (walk-in mental health clinic): (780) 342-2700.

The caseload at the Zebra Centre has been increasing year over year, this signifies a change within our community as our members are recognizing the moral and legal obligation to report abuse. Alberta is home to eight CAC's across the province that are providing support to children and youth who have experienced abuse. Each of these centres' are fully operational or in various stages of future development. Each community and Alberta as a whole can work together to ensure every child is heard and believed and do our part in being their voice when they need us most.

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*Founded in 2002, The Zebra Child Protection Centre is a non-profit, community-based organization that was established to improve the lives of children who have suffered abuse. As the first Child Advocacy Centre of its kind in Canada, the Zebra Centre's model was revolutionary - bring together a community of professionals under one roof to support the child throughout the entire disclosure, investigative, judicial and healing process. Today, the Zebra Centre leads the way in continuing to providing a safe and child-friendly space where kids can tell. For more information, please visit our [website](#).*

Learn more about the #KidsCanTell story by following us on social media:



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