

News Release
For immediate release

April 27, 2020

Child Abuse Reporting on the Decline *Alberta Child Advocacy Centres' urging community action*

EDMONTON, AB – As COVID-19 isolation has swept across our province every community has been faced with making the necessary changes to ensure health and safety of all. Everyone copes with change and stress differently and as Child Advocacy Centres (CAC) we are committed to our role of keeping children and youth in our community safe.

Typically, in the summer when school is out and children and youth are at home all the time and not attending school or after school programs we see a decline in reporting. Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic we are seeing this occur earlier and will likely see this continue for a longer period of time.

The yearly caseload at the Zebra Centre has been increasing year over year, this signifies a change within our community as people are recognizing their duty to report child abuse. In 2019, the Zebra Centre supported 2,362 children and youth, which was a 12.6 per cent increase from 2018. The Zebra Centre has seen a 31 per cent decline in files over mid-March to mid-April from 2019 to 2020. That means that this time last year the Zebra Centre was supporting 80 children and youth and are now supporting 55 children and youth.

We need our community to continue recognizing the moral and legal obligation to report child abuse as this is a time where the typical safeguards for children and youth who experience abuse are impacted.

Alberta is home to eight CACs 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. The Child Advocacy Centres of Alberta are urging their communities to take action as we all have a responsibility to keep children and youth in our community safe. Each of us need to equip ourselves with the tools to recognize child abuse and speak up for our children. 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.

To learn more about how to recognize child abuse and how you can help those in your community visit albertacacs.ca.

CACs are a safe place where children and youth who have experienced abuse can go to tell their story and be supported throughout the entire disclosure, investigation, judicial and healing journey. By supporting children, youth and their non-offending caregivers we provide them with customized supports that best suit their needs and will allow them to heal at their own pace.

-30-

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 provide 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:



Media Contacts

Emily Murray

Communications Coordinator
Zebra Child Protection Centre
Direct: 780.886.3495
Email: emily.murray@zebracentre.ca

Child Advocacy Centres of Alberta



Karen Orser
CEO Calgary and Area Child
Advocacy Centre
403-428-5410
korser@calgarycac.ca

www.calgarycac.ca

Allison Colpitts
Communications Specialist
403-428-5300
403-465-4390
acolpitts@calgarycac.ca



Caribou Child and Youth Centre –
Grande Prairie
Direct: 780-814-7223
caribou_director@pacecentre.com

www.cariboucentre.com

Mark Jones
Chief Executive Officer
Direct: 587-272-2233
Cell: 403-352-8554
mjones@centralalbertacac.ca

www.centralalbertacac.ca



Alyssa Truant
Communications & Community
Awareness Coordinator
Direct: 587-272-2233
Cell: 587-447-2506
atruant@centralalbertacac.ca



Kristine J. Cassie
Chief Executive Officer
Chinook Sexual Assault Centre
Phone: 403-694-1094
Toll Free: 1-844-576-2512
ceo@csacleth.ca

www.csacleth.ca



Tammy Shopland
Executive Director
(306) 825-8255
tammy.isaic@sasktel.net

www.lloydminstersexualassault.com/little-bear/

Tammy Lynn Adamson
Advocacy & Engagement Director
tammylynn.isaic@sasktel.net



Christina Johnson
Executive Director
Phone: 403-548-2717
Christina@mhsarc.com

www.mhsarc.com

Southeastern Alberta, Sexual
Assault Response Committee



Janine Keagan
Care Center for Children & Youth,
Manager
Phone: 780-750-8655
Janine.keagan@waypointswb.ca

www.waypointswb.ca



Cheryl Diebel
Chief Executive Officer
Phone: 780-421-2016
Cheryl.Diebel@zebracentre.ca

www.zebracentre.ca

Emily Murray
Communications Coordinator
Phone: 780-886-3495
emily.murray@zebracentre.ca