

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Serving: Wetzel and Tyler Counties



The LIGHTHOUSE Ledger

quarterly newsletter

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Our Work By the #s

Since January 2025, The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center has seen a total of **79 new children** following suspected abuse or neglect. Our services included:

- 84 developmentally appropriate, child-friendly, fact-finding forensic interviews
- 306 trauma-focused therapy sessions
- 50 referrals for mental health services
- 197 instances of advocacy services provided to children and families
- 2,647 children provided body safety education

A Message from the Executive Director:

As fall arrives and the leaves begin to change, I've been reflecting on the incredible growth we've seen over my 11 years at the Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center. From a single-person team to the seven dedicated staff we have today, it's been quite a remarkable journey. With your support, we continue to provide a safe, caring space where every child's voice is heard and their healing journey nurtured.

With gratitude,
Susan Scharf
Executive Director

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

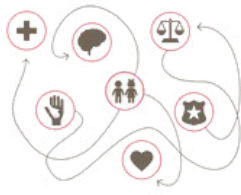
Updates from the CAC

What is a CAC?

The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-friendly, safe facility where child protection, criminal justice, and treatment professionals work together to investigate abuse, hold offenders accountable, and help children heal.

Without a CAC, child victims of abuse can be taken from agency to agency and endure multiple interviews, which creates additional trauma and wastes valuable resources.

Without CACs



With CACs



We are excited to have Breana back from maternity leave and announce the addition of Blake to her family.

Looking to make a difference?

Join Our Mental Health Team

We are looking for a caring and committed Therapist to provide trauma-focused therapy to children and families in Wetzel and Tyler Counties.

This isn't just a job — it's a chance to make a real difference in the lives of kids who need healing, hope, and support.

- Based in New Martinsville, WV
- Must be passionate about helping children heal
- Job description and how to apply: [Click Here](#)

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of a mission that changes lives every single day!

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Community Involvement

Back to School Fairs in Tyler and Wetzel Counties

In the month of August, our staff participated in the Tyler County Back to School Fair and the Wetzel County Back to School Bash. At each event we provided pencils, erasers and information about the CAC to students and parents. There were approximately 530 students total in attendance preparing for school. We are always glad to participate in these events and create connections with the students, parents, schools and communities.

Staff Day–Family Fun

The CAC staff brought their families to the office for our July Staff Day. We enjoyed painting flower pots, tie-dying shirts, and eating great food. Our children played games in the yard and the staff was able to enjoy some time relaxing together. We had a total of 17 people here for the day including our children ranging from ages 3-18.

The Lighthouse CAC Hosted a Food Truck Fundraiser

The Lighthouse CAC hosted its first Food Truck Fundraiser in the month of July. There were some setbacks with weather and scheduling, but there were also great successes! We had four trucks participate, giving a donation total of \$515.86. We are so grateful for Stalder Family Creamery, Leslie's Grub Shack, Sister Samurai Hibachi, and Saguaro Mobile Kitchen. Also, a huge thanks to all of those who came and supported the food trucks and the CAC! Your donations are going towards making positive change in children's lives!

Where your donation goes:

- Forensic Interviews
- Compassionate Advocacy
- Trauma-informed Therapy
- Essential Resources for Families
- Community Education
- Professional Training
- Advocacy and Prevention

Training Opportunities

National Children's Advocacy Center Virtual Training Center

<https://ncacvte.org>

Southern Regional Children's Advocacy Center

<https://www.srcac.org/training>

Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center

<https://www.mrcac.org/edunet-webinars>

Making a Difference: Mandate to Report

Rebecca Bailey, Outreach Advocate is trained facilitator, contact CAC to schedule

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Community Involvement

Mental Health Moment

6 STEP BASIC BREATH AWARENESS MEDITATION

Breath awareness is a simple but powerful breathing meditation technique that puts the mind back into contact with the breath. It will make you more aware of your body and your physical being, and it will focus and relax your mind.

1

Set a timer for 3 minutes.

Make sure you're in a space free from distractions and that the temperature of the room is comfortable for you. Choose a comfortable place to sit.

2

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed.

Focus your attention on the present moment ... on sights, sounds and sensations. Thoughts will come up; simply ask these thoughts to slow down.

3

Focus your attention on your breath.

Observe your breath moving smoothly in and out of your body. Just simply observe it, like sitting on the shore of the ocean watching the waves coming and going.

4

Bring your mind back to the breath.

When your mind wanders, you may momentarily forget to focus on your breath. Simply bring your mind back to the present moment and back to your breath. Always return to the breath.

5

Let go of thoughts and feelings.

When thoughts and feelings come up, observe them, but do not attach to them. Non-attachment is observing from a distance. Just let the thoughts and feelings go. It's just a thought; nothing more.

6

Continue the meditation.

For 3 minutes, continue in this manner. Simply relax, breathe, focus, and let go, repeating the steps as necessary. Relax. Breathe. Focus. Let go.

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education (Body Safety) in the Schools for Wetzel and Tyler Counties



Each school year, our Outreach Advocate Becky provides Body Safety Education for the schools in Wetzel and Tyler Counties. These presentations to the students are offered free of charge to the school and cover the requirements for Erin's Law in West Virginia. Becky has been presenting in the schools since 2021 using curriculum developed by the State Board of Education, which covers the topics of private parts, safe and unsafe touches, refusal strategies, trusted adults, and healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Joint Training for Forensic Interviewers and Prosecuting Attorneys



Kelsey, Becky and Justin attended the two-day *From Interview to Trial: FI & PA Joint Training* hosted by WVCAN. This training strengthens the collaboration between forensic interviewers and prosecutors to ensure justice and support for child victims throughout the legal process. We're grateful for these opportunities and proud to invest in continuing education that helps us serve our community better. Together, we're making a difference — from the very first interview to the final steps in court.

J U L Y - S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 5

www.thelighthousecac.org

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Our Team

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Executive Director

Kelsey Loy

CAC Program Director

Rebecca Bailey

Outreach Advocate

Breauna Knight

Family Advocate

Jacqueline Watkins MSW, LGSW

Supervisory Therapist

Lindsey Lewis MSW, LGSW

Therapist

Brittany Loub

Administrative Assistant

**To Report Suspected Child
Abuse or Neglect in WV:**

Call Centralized Intake: 1-800-352-6513

If an emergency: 911

