

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 2026, The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center has seen a total of **17 new children** following suspected abuse or neglect. Our services included:

- 17 developmentally appropriate, child-friendly, fact-finding forensic interviews
- 104 trauma-focused therapy sessions
- 8 referrals for mental health services
- 63 instances of advocacy services provided to children and families
- 575 children provided body safety education

A Message from the Executive Director:

The first few months of 2026 have been full of meaningful work at the Lighthouse CAC. Our team has continued providing forensic interviews, advocacy, and trauma-focused mental health services to children and families in Wetzel and Tyler Counties, while also working diligently toward re-accreditation through the National Children's Alliance to ensure we meet the highest national standards of care.

In February, we also traveled to the Capitol for Child Advocacy Day to meet with legislators and share the impact Child Advocacy Centers have on children across West Virginia.

Thanks to specific funding from the Sunshine Fund through the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network, in March we took time to recharge as a team with a fun morning of getting manicures or pedicures followed by lunch at Olive Garden. Moments like these allow our team to step away, reconnect, and return refreshed for the important work ahead.

As we move into the rest of 2026, we remain grateful for our community, partners, and supporters who stand with us as we continue our mission of bringing hope, healing, and justice to the children we serve.

With appreciation,
Susan Scharf
Executive Director, The Lighthouse CAC

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.

CAC Staff Day

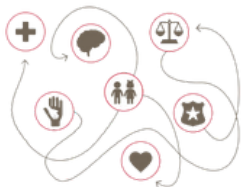
The CAC staff took a staff day on March 11, 2026. We traveled to the Highlands for a day of pampering, shopping and fun.

We visited Tony's Spa where we received manicures or pedicures. We all went shopping and shared a wonderful meal at Olive Garden.

The staff day was made possible through special funding provided by The Sunshine Fund through WVCAN.

Staff days are so important to relax and connect as a team through activities that are unrelated to work. We are able to come back more focused and recharged for the work we do.

Without CACs



With CACs



Kelsey, Brittany and Emma celebrated birthdays in the month of January! We wish them a year of blessings.

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Updates from the CAC

CAC Mental Health Welcomes Intern

Welcome to Emma Richmond and congratulations on completing the TF-CBT training to work toward certification as a TF-CBT therapist. Emma is currently interning at our mental health office through Concord University's Master of Social Work (MSW) Program. She completed her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from Bethany University in May 2025. We look forward to working with Emma throughout her internship and seeing her knowledge and skills put to use with the children we serve.



Wetzel and Tyler MDIT Training

The CAC is working with the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network, WVCAN, to provide a full day training on May 20, 2026. This training will be focused on improving team function and engagement, while discussing common challenges within teams. Shiloh Woodard, Executive Director of WVCAN will be presenting to the MDIT members from Wetzel and Tyler Counties. This training is best suited for those who already attend MDIT meetings in Wetzel or Tyler, or are law enforcement, CPS, CAC, school social workers, mental health or medical providers. The training will be free to attend and social work and law enforcement CEUs will be provided. More information and registration link will be provided soon on our Facebook page!

Training Opportunities

National Children's Advocacy Center Virtual Training Center

<https://ncacvtc.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

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Community Involvement

Child Advocacy Day at the Capital

2026 Child Advocacy Day was a powerful reminder of what's possible when we show up together for children.

Our Executive Director, Susan Scharf, and CAC Program Coordinator, Kelsey Loy, were honored to be at the WV State Capitol on Monday, February 16th advocating for child survivors of abuse and the life-changing work of Child Advocacy Centers. They were grateful for the opportunity to visit with Delegate Bill Bell, Delegate Charles Sheedy, and Senator Chris Rose and share how coordinated, trauma-informed responses help children find safety, healing, and hope.

A heartfelt thank you to the West Virginia Legislature and the WV Child Advocacy Network for creating space for these critical conversations—and for continuing to support the professionals who stand beside children and families on their path toward healing and justice.



THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Updates from the CAC

CAC Data Report

The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center data report for fiscal year 2025 was released in February. This data shows comparison to state and national statistics collected from CACs nationwide. The CAC served 88 new children and provided 92 forensic interviews following allegations of abuse.

The data graphic shows some highlights from our full data report. Mental Health services is the area with the most growth and improvement from last year. The CAC added in house mental health services for the children we serve. Since this addition, we have had a 52% increase in therapy referrals and 48% increase in therapy services initiated.

Information about the statewide data report can be found here: <https://wvcan.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/2025-Stats-One-Pager.pdf>

DATA REPORT

FY 2025

88 New Children Served
92 Forensic Interviews

14

0-6 years old

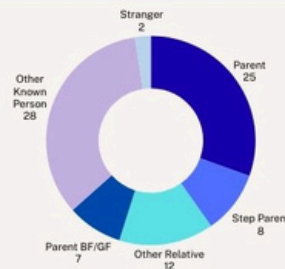
35

7-12 years old

39

13-18 years old

40% of children served had at least one reported or suspected disability.



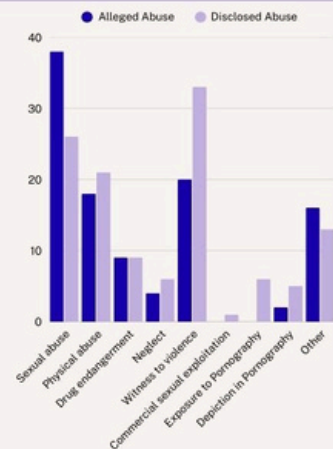
ALLEGED OFFENDERS:

98%

Of alleged offenders are known to the victim.

73%

Of children who received a forensic interview at the Lighthouse CAC disclosed abuse compared to 66% statewide.



Forensic Interview Rate Comparison Per 1,000 Children in Official Service Area

	Counties Officially Served	Child Population in Official Service Area	# Forensic Interviews in 2024-2025	* Rate of Forensic Interviews by Child Population
STATE TOTAL	48	329,107	4,603	13.99
(LIGHTHOUSE) CAC	Tyler, Wetzel	4,417	92	20.83

* Populations based on estimates of individuals under age 18 per county from US Census Data for all counties officially served by a particular CAC. Rates per 1,000 children in population of official service area.

OUTCOMES:

50

Referrals to therapy/counseling.

52%

increase in therapy referrals compared to last year.

48%

increase in therapy initiated compared to last year.

14 cases with charges filed, 7 cases indicted, 4 cases convicted by trial or plea.

TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE IN WV DIAL:
1-800-352-6513



www.thelighthousecac.org

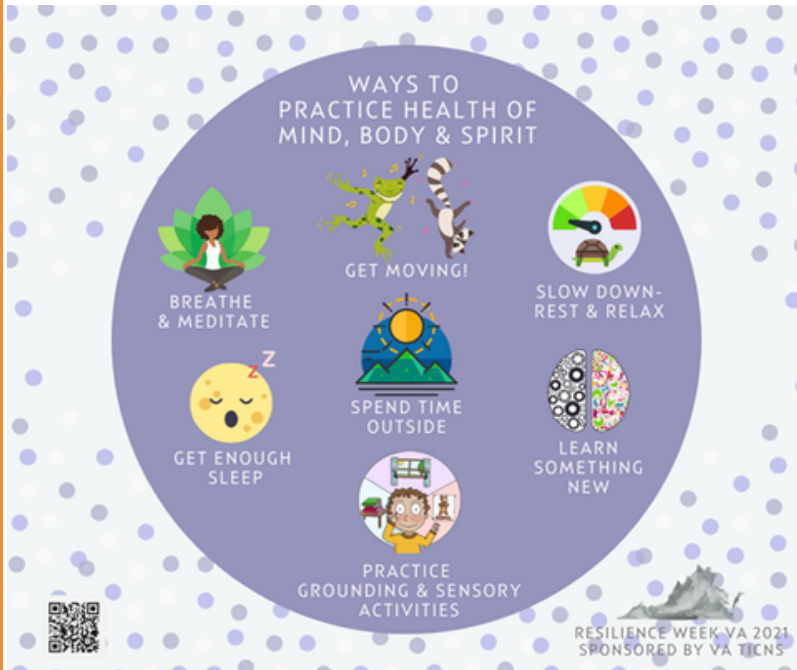


@thelighthousecac

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Community Involvement

Mental Health Moment



Donor Spotlight

Thank You to Our Recent Supporters

Champions for Children (\$1,000+)

- Wetzel County Commission
- Tyler County Commission
- DAC Energy
- Anonymous Donor
- WV Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN)

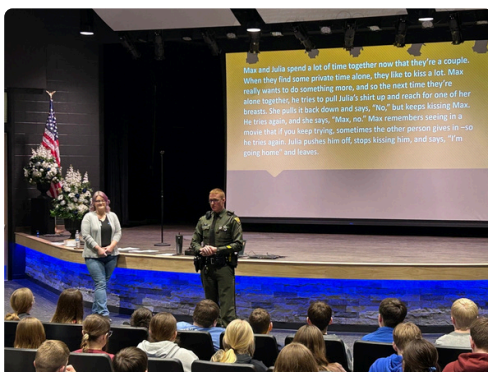
Advocates (\$500-\$999)

- Sprouse Windows and Doors

Friends of the Lighthouse (\$1-\$499)

- Paden Fork Chapel Helping Hands Group

CAC Provides Erin's Law Presentation



Tyler Consolidated Middle School and High School students received an important presentation from Becky, our Outreach Advocate and Trooper Neff from the West Virginia State Police.

This presentation met the requirements for Erin's Law and focused on helping students understand personal safety, recognizing unsafe situations, and knowing how to seek help from trusted adults.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the schools in Wetzel and Tyler Counties to ensure students receive the education and resources they need to stay safe.

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Will You Help a Child Take Their First Step Toward Healing?

At the Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center, every donation brings light, hope, and healing to a child in crisis.

When a child walks through our doors, their journey toward healing begins – and your generosity helps lead the way. At the Lighthouse CAC, your gift becomes more than just financial support – you offer a lifeline. You provide a voice for the voiceless, safety for the vulnerable, and hope for those who need it most.

Where Your Donation Goes:

Forensic Interviews

Support developmentally appropriate, non-leading interviews that allow children to safely share their stories – helping ensure justice and protection.

Compassionate Advocacy

Our advocates walk alongside children and their caregivers, offering guidance, emotional support, and access to resources throughout their healing journey.

Trauma-Informed Therapy & Counseling

Your donation provides professional, trauma-focused therapy sessions that help children and families process abuse, build resilience, and reclaim their futures.

Essential Resources for Families

You help meet urgent needs by funding items like food, clothing, diapers, hygiene products, birthday gifts, and transportation assistance – because healing starts with stability.

Community Education & Professional Training

Your gift helps prevent abuse before it happens by supporting education for schools, churches, and civic groups. It also trains professionals – law enforcement, teachers, medical staff – in best practices for recognizing and responding to abuse.

Advocacy & Prevention

Your generosity empowers us to partner with agencies, lawmakers, and leaders to protect children, promote prevention, and strengthen systems of care.

Your donation makes a real, lasting difference.

Because of you, a child is heard.

Because of you, a family is supported.

Because of you, healing begins.

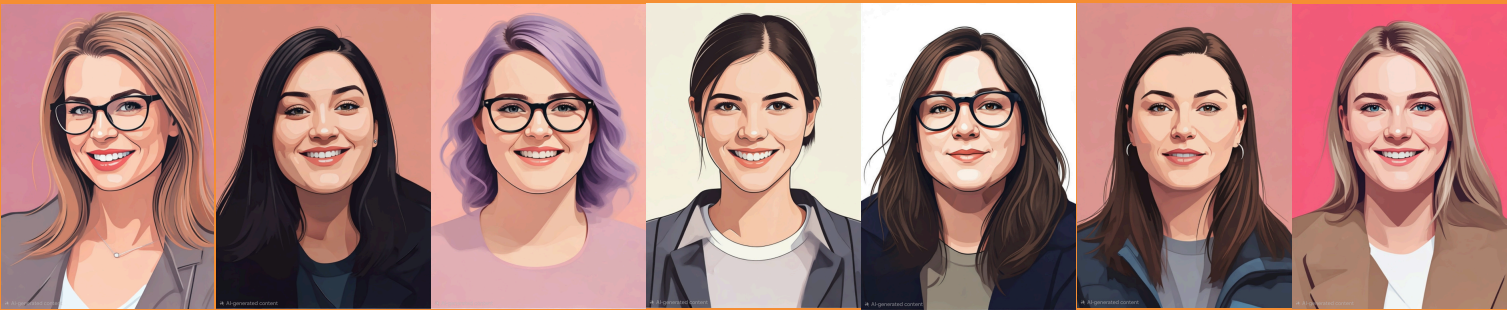
Thank you for being part of the change.

To donate, visit <https://thelighthousecac.org/donate/>

The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All gifts are tax-deductible.

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

Serving: Wetzel and Tyler Counties



Board of Directors

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thelighthousecac.org

Follow us on Facebook:
[@thelighthousecac](https://www.facebook.com/thelighthousecac)

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

Brittany Loub
Administrative Assistant

Emma Richmond
Intern

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

**Call Centralized Intake: 1-800-352-6513
If an emergency: 911**

