

DCFS Dir. Sheldon, Sen. Morrison, Rep. Mussman to speak on behalf of child advocacy centers

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Springfield, IL - In 1983, April was proclaimed the first National Child Abuse Prevention Month. As a result, child abuse and neglect awareness activities are promoted across the country during April of each year. On April 13, Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois (CACI) will host a Legislative Day at the Illinois State Capitol. An information session for press will be held in Room 010 at 12:30pm. DCFS Director George Sheldon; Senator Julie Morrison, Representative Michelle Mussman, CACI Board of Directors; and CACI Executive Director Billie Larkin will be speaking on behalf of Illinois CACs.

“1 in 10 children will experience sexual abuse before their 18th birthday,” said Billie Larkin, CACI Executive Director. “Children’s Advocacy Centers give children in Illinois a voice and the help they need to heal.”

CACs are child focused, community based organizations in which rely heavily on collaboration from many disciplines including law enforcement, child protection, mental health, medical and victim advocacy in order to help children who have been abused. These team members work together to conduct interviews and make team decisions about investigation, treatment, management and prosecution of child abuse cases and services for victims. CACs provide ongoing, long-term advocacy and education to adults and children about how to heal the wounds inflicted by abuse. In FY2015, CACs in Illinois helped just under 11,000 children and their families.

CACI is the state chapter organization that provides support for the entire network of CACs and MDTs in Illinois through education, training, technical support services and organizational capacity building. By properly training the MDT members in Illinois, CACI can ensure children across the state receive quality services at their local CAC.