



Cornerstone Child Advocacy Center

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**CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS SEE
6.8% INCREASE IN CHILD VICTIMS SERVED IN STATE**
Cornerstone CAC Sees 68 New Children in Boone and Lincoln Counties

Charleston, WV — Today, West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN) releases its State Aggregate Data for the 2016 fiscal year. The data in the report reflects service from West Virginia's 20 Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) who provided official service to 37 of 55 counties in the state and courtesy services to other counties.

This past fiscal year, CACs served 3,518 children – a nearly 50% increase in the last five years. Locally, the Cornerstone Child Advocacy Center saw 68 new children, which is 3.03% higher than last year and a 23.64% increase of new children served in the last 5 years.

One of every 100 children in WVCAN's service area was seen by a child advocacy center last year. 79% of the children served by Cornerstone CAC were under the age of 13, and 28% of children are reported or suspected to have a disability. In WV CAC's, that average was only 16%. Most of the children served by the Cornerstone CAC were there because of allegations of sexual abuse – 75%.

A third of alleged offenders were the child's parent or step-parent, and 99% of alleged offenders were someone the child knows. There were 12 cases with charges filed, and 9 individuals convicted for crimes against children.

Caregivers were surveyed after receiving services and 100% agreed "If I knew anyone else who was dealing with a situation like the one my family faced, I would tell that person about the center."

"Everyone's participation is critical. Focusing on ways to connect with families is the best thing our community can do to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect." said Monica Ballard-Booth, Cornerstone's Director. "These are some of the most critical needs facing the Cornerstone Child

Advocacy Center: funds for trauma focused therapy, local businesses who will partner with us financially and medical facilities that will provide special medical evaluations for children who have been abused. Right now, sexually abused children in Boone and Lincoln County have to travel out of county just to receive treatment.”

The full statewide report includes data on victim demographics, alleged offender demographics, reported vs. disclosed abuse breakdown, services performed, criminal justice response, and CAC income budget breakdown. The full statewide data report can be found at <http://wvcan.org/media/>.

Cornerstone Family Interventions, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization with two main programs: the Cornerstone Child Advocacy Center and the Cornerstone Parents as Teachers serving Boone and Lincoln Counties. Each program is focused on Cornerstone’s mission: to promote safety, permanency, and wellbeing for children and families in West Virginia. We provide trauma informed services. Visit the Cornerstone CAC’s webpage at <http://CFIWV.org>. Don’t forget to like our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CFIINC> and learn about our free support groups, parent group connections, and other events.

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A CAC is a child-friendly facility in which child protection, criminal justice, and child treatment professionals work together to investigate abuse, hold offenders accountable, and help children heal. Rather than having a child taken from agency to agency to endure multiple interviews, the CAC model brings the system to the child for an effective, child-centered, healing process.