

Memorandum

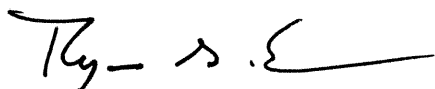


DATE: September 20, 2013

TO: Members of the Public Safety Committee

SUBJECT: **Dallas Police Department Child Abuse Squad**

Attached is briefing material on the "Dallas Police Department Child Abuse Squad" to be presented to the Members of the Public Safety Committee on Monday, September 23, 2013.



Ryan S. Evans
Interim First Assistant City Manager

Attachment

cc: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council
A.C. Gonzalez, Interim City Manager
Warren M. S. Ernst, Interim City Attorney
Judge Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Jill A. Jordan, P. E., Assistant City Manager
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Charles M. Cato, Interim Assistant City Manager
Theresa O'Donnell, Interim Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Frank Libro, Public Information Officer
Elsa Cantu, Assistant to the City Manager – Mayor and Council



Dallas Police Department
Child Abuse Squad
Public Safety Committee
September 23, 2013



Purpose

The purpose of today's briefing is to define the role and job function of the Dallas Police Department's Child Abuse Unit

Goals

- Provide a coordinated multidisciplinary approach to the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse cases
- Use multidisciplinary team approach to investigate cases by housing partner agencies under one roof
- Actively promote child abuse education and awareness



Goals

- To complete a thorough investigation into offenses that occur against children
- Obtain and share pertinent information with Child Protective Services
- Obtain medical data that will assist in the investigation and prosecution of crimes against children
- Provide services such as therapy, counseling, transportation, supplies, and any other resources available to assist families through the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC)

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- History of DCAC
 - Created in 1991
 - 2nd Children's Advocacy Center in the state of Texas
 - 1 of 66 Children's Advocacy Centers in Texas; 1 of 750 nationwide
 - Served over 30,000 children and families
 - Relocated to new location in January 2013
 - Former Location: 14,000 sq ft
 - New Location 56,000 sq ft



Dallas Children's Advocacy Center
3611 Swiss Avenue
Dallas, Texas
**Former Location*

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- Who We Work With?
 - Dallas District Attorney Office
 - Dallas Police Department and 25 additional Dallas County Law Enforcement Agencies
 - Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
 - Children's Medical Center
 - Medical City Children's Hospital
 - UT Southwestern Department of Pediatrics
- Housed at DCAC
 - DCAC Staff
 - Dallas Police Department – CAU
 - 5 Child Protective Services Units
 - 1 Assistant District Attorney



Dallas Children's Advocacy Center
5351 Samuell Blvd
Dallas, Texas
** Current Location*

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- DCAC provides a warm, child-friendly environment to help children who are referred by law enforcement or CPS
- Our average client is a 10 year-old girl, sexually abused by someone she knows and trusts
- A specially-trained DCAC forensic interviewer listens to the child's story and ask non-leading questions as the child talks about the trauma he /she has experienced
 - Because the child does not have to interact with or be interviewed by multiple professionals, this reduces trauma for the child and provides for a much stronger case if the case goes to court



Forensic Interview Room

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- Service Criteria
 - Age criteria
 - Children 0 to 17 years of age at the time of offense/incident
 - Any adult persons mentally or developmentally disabled
 - Types of interviews
 - Sexual abuse
 - Severe physical abuse
 - Witness to homicide or a violent crime
 - Child abductions



Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- DCAC Staff
 - DCAC Administrative Staff
 - Forensic Interview
 - 5 Forensic Interviewers
 - 3 Bilingual Interviewers
 - Specialized Training
 - Mental Health
 - 17 Therapist (with 6 Therapy Interns)
 - 8 Bilingual Therapist
 - Specialized Degrees and Licensure
 - Family Assistance
 - Intake Coordinator
 - Family Assistance Supervisor
 - Long Term Case Manager

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- The DCAC brings together the team of specialized professionals
 - Investigates child abuse cases and prosecutes offenders
 - Provides therapy for child victims

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- DCAC provides the following services:
 - Multi-disciplinary case review
 - Ensures that these delicate cases proceed in the best interest of the child victim
 - Child abuse cases in Dallas County
 - Forensic Interview Program
 - Ensures that a possible child victim has an opportunity to tell his/her story to an unbiased professional
 - Other professionals who may investigate and prosecute cases against alleged perpetrators observe the interview
 - This both reduces trauma to the child and allows for a legally-defendable interview should the case proceed through the legal system

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center

- DCAC's Therapy Program
 - Clients receive specialized treatment to move beyond the role of victim
 - Goal is to lead to a healthy and happy life
- DCAC Family Assistance Program
 - Provides support, information, referrals and resources to victims and their families
- The DCAC Education Program
 - Educates the community in the detection, investigation and treatment of child abuse
 - International influence through hosting the Crimes Against Children's Conference:
 - The largest conference training front-line professionals who work with child abuse cases daily such as FBI, law enforcement, CPS, prosecutors, and therapists



Law Enforcement
Dallas Police Department
Child Abuse Squad

Squad Consists Of:

- 1 Sergeant
- 11 Detectives
- Office Assistant



Investigative Responsibilities

- The Child Abuse Squad is responsible for all sexual assault and physical injury offenses including:
 - Death
 - When the victim is a juvenile and the suspect is a
 - Family member
 - Guardian
 - Household member
 - Or any person who has legal control or responsibility for the safety of the child for any period of time

Physical Injury Offenses Investigated

- Capital Murder
- Unexplained Death
- Injury to a Child
- Child Abandonment
- Endangering a Child
- Misdemeanor Assaults
- Unlawful Restraint
- Making a Firearm Accessible to a Child

Sexual Abuse Offenses Investigated

- Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Young Child
- Aggravated Sexual Assault
- Sexual Assault
- Indecency with a Child
- Sexual Performance by a Child
- Criminal Solicitation of a Minor

Education and Awareness

- In addition to their investigative responsibilities, Child Abuse Squad personnel are involved in:
 - Actively promoting child abuse education and awareness
 - Regularly conduct classes and attend speaking engagements at:
 - DPD Academy, DPD Citizen Academy, DCCC El Centro, DCAC

Summary

- The Dallas Police Department's Child Abuse Unit strives to:
 - Aggressively pursue individuals that commit crimes against children
 - Provide resources for positive prosecution of child abuse cases
 - Increase the safety of children
 - Provide community awareness through programs, videos, conferences, educational classes, and Child Abuse Awareness month

Questions?