

Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc 2012-2015 Strategic Plan



Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc., P.O. Box 84, 127 West Cobb St., Grove Hill, AL 36451

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RCAC, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

An organization's mission statement is an opportunity to convey in a concise and compelling way the difference the organization is aiming to make in the world. Stakeholders want to be part of making this happen and they want the organization to be remembered for this in the future.

Mission Statement

To serve victims of child abuse and neglect in order to promote healing and to educate the public to protect our children from abuse.

This is accomplished by:

- Providing a multi-disciplinary team approach to the investigation, intervention and prosecution of child abuse;
- Providing safe, neutral, child friendly and supportive environments for the children we serve;
- Providing an extensive outreach program to schools and the community which includes a variety of prevention services, education on child abuse dynamics and information on healthy child rearing practices; and
- Providing services free of charge to child victims that include specialized therapy, support groups, victim advocacy and foster care.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc. has two child-focused programs, “Almost Home” and the Regional Child Advocacy Center and serves children who are victims of neglect, sexual abuse and physical abuse. The agency was incorporated as a not for profit agency January 30, 1996 under the name Children’s Center of Clarke County. In December of 1999 “Almost Home” was built with grant funding and donations by the Town of Grove Hill where it is located. “Almost Home” is a foster home licensed by the Clarke County Department of Human Resources and is able to take referrals from any County DHR in the State of Alabama. It offers a secure home-like environment where children placed in foster may reside while more permanent plans are being made. Our full-time foster parent, Valerie Pugh, coordinates with the child’s social worker to meet the needs of up to six children from birth to 18 years of age including enrolling them in local schools.

The need for a Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) for this Judicial Circuit was recognized when “Almost Home” was built. However, due to funding issues this dream was not fulfilled until June 2004 when the first forensic interview was conducted and the multi-disciplinary team began meeting in a temporary location at the foster home. We began with three professionals, from law enforcement and Clarke County DHR being trained at the National CAC Training Center in Huntsville, in Basic and Advanced Forensic Interviewing of Children. In March of 2005 a CAC director was hired and that year a 1920’s historical home in downtown Grove Hill was purchased for a permanent location for the CAC. The facility’s renovations were completed with much volunteer labor, donated materials and funds from area foundations and the facility was opened in April of 2006. In January of 2006 a Victim Advocate was hired to provide support and educational activities to children and families. Also, a part-time therapist was hired that same year to provide free counseling to children served by the CAC.

In 2007 the Board of Directors voted to change the name of the agency to the Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc. to better reflect the regional service area of the CAC and “Almost Home.” In Aug. of 2007 we opened a Satellite Office for Choctaw County in the Gilberttown Town Hall. There we have a child friendly interview room, a conference room where the MDT members view and digitally record the interview and a waiting area for family. In May of 2009 a Satellite Office for Washington County was opened in the former Health Department building in Chatom. There are three designated rooms that have been decorated by individuals and groups in the community to provide a child-friendly space for children and families. There is an interview room, a conference room for the MDT to meet and view the interview and a room for intake that is also a comfortable waiting room for family members. We have a separate entrance for our area of the building that is occupied during the morning hours by a Senior Citizen Nutrition group.

The Regional Child Advocacy Center became a fully accredited member of the Alabama Network of Children’s Advocacy Centers in 2006 and received full accreditation from the National Children’s Alliance in 2007.

STAKEHOLDERS

- Board of Directors
 - Michael Goldman, Chairperson, AltaPointe Community Counseling Center
 - Betty Barlow, Vice-Chairperson, Retired DHR Director
 - Wilma Day, Secretary, Retired Educator
 - Larry Jones, Treasurer, Insurance Agent
 - Randy Abston, Pastor and Environmental Engineer
 - Joey Blount, Procurement Manager
 - Maurice Dyess, Clarke County Sheriff's Office
 - Deloris Fleming, Retired Realtor
 - Mark Gerald, Financial Advisor
 - Wyman O. (Gil) Gilmore, Attorney
 - Cynthia Jackson, Grove Hill Memorial Hospital Nursing
 - Earline Pearce, Community Representative
 - Johnny Reid, Grove Hill Police Department
 - Julie Smith, CRNI, McConaghy Home Medical
 - Spencer Walker, District Attorney
 - Peggy Williams, Washington County Registrar
 - Stephen Winters, Attorney
- Clarke County Law Enforcement:
 - Clarke County Sheriff's Office
 - Grove Hill Police Department
 - Jackson Police Department
 - Thomasville Police Department
 - Juvenile Probation Office
- Choctaw County Law Enforcement:
 - Choctaw County Sheriff's Office
 - Butler Police Department
 - Gilbertown Police Department
 - Pennington Police Department
 - Silas Police Department
 - Toxey Police Department
 - Juvenile Probation Office
- Washington County Law Enforcement:
 - Washington County Sheriff's Office
 - Chatom Police Department
 - McIntosh Police Department
 - Millry Police Department
 - Juvenile Probation Office

- District Attorney's Office, First Judicial District
- Clarke County Department of Human Resources
- Choctaw County Department of Human Resources
- Washington County Department of Human Resources
- Grove Hill Memorial Hospital
- Washington County Hospital
- Rush Hospital
- Dr. Katherine Hensleigh
- Clarke County Health Department
- Choctaw County Health Department
- Washington County Health Department
- Clarke County Board of Education
- Choctaw County Board of Education
- Washington County Board of Education
- Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc.
- Gilbertown Town Hall
- Children, Family Members and Caregivers in the Region

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic Planning is:

- A long-term future oriented process of assessment, goal setting, and decision making that maps an explicit path between the present and a vision for the future
- A plan of action

Strategic Planning attempts to:

- Realize the mission of the organization
- Develop new opportunities
- Be proactive, anticipate change, and avoid surprises
- Guide the organization's goals, objectives, and activities

The Strategic Planning Process answers Four Key Questions:

- Where we are now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- How do we measure our progress and revise our plans?

Strategic Plan Elements

- **Mission** – Defines the organization's cause. Explains why the organization exists.
- **Assessment** – Evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the organization
- **Goal** – A specific and measurable accomplishment to be achieved within time and cost constraints
- **Objectives** – Specifies how the goal will be accomplished
- **Priorities** – What do we tackle first? What second?
- **Strategies/Action Steps** – The methods, processes, and/or action that must be taken to achieve a goal or objective. The steps in how it will be achieved, who will do what, and by when?
- **Performance Measures & Benchmarks** – Review performance measures established for each objective and update plan and progress each year and perform a comprehensive revision of the plan every four years.

SERVICES

This is a set of beliefs about the world that frame an organization's work. Underlying assumptions inform the approach to the work or why an organization chooses to tackle problems or issues in a certain way. They make it clear why an organization's Board of Directors and staff believe that the actions they will take will have the desired results.

FOSTER CARE is provided by a licensed foster care worker at "Almost Home" for children referred by any Department of Human Resources in the State of Alabama.

FORENSIC INTERVIEWS are provided by trained professionals, for the purpose of investigation and disclosure of abuse at the Regional Child Advocacy Center and its two satellite offices.

CRISIS INTERVENTION and emotional support through our Victim Advocacy Program is provided from the first forensic interview throughout the investigation and prosecution of the case.

CHILD FRIENDLY, HOME-LIKE ATOMSPHERE in which children can feel safe and cared for during the interviewing process.

THERAPY is for child victims. Individual, group, and play therapy are offered. In addition, HEROES, Great and Small support groups are offered for both children and adults. Teens and their caregivers may participate in the Survivors support group.

EXTENDED FORENSIC EVALUATIONS (4-6 sessions) are conducted on a limited basis when abuse is strongly suspected but no disclosure or a tentative disclosure was made.

COURT SUPPORT AND COURT PREPARATION is extended to any child and family whose case goes to court. RCAC's Victim Advocate provides court prep through booklets, DVD's and practice. The Victim Advocate or Director attend court sessions when family or child is present to provide support and be able to help with questions. The RCAC is also a safe place for children to wait if they are involved in the court proceedings.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES - board and staff members may present programs to civic, community, and church groups about the services "Almost Home" and the Regional Child Advocacy Center provide, along with information and statistics about child abuse/neglect reports. Tours, programs, and presentations are provided upon request.

PREVENTION EDUCATION SERVICES are offered for children in the third and fourth grades with the "Someone To Talk To" puppet program and other age- appropriate abuse prevention programs are provided to Head Start programs when requested.

RESOURCE LIBRARY- books, tapes, and other materials are available for children and their families to check out. In addition, a professional resource selection is provided for those working on child abuse cases.

PROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION is necessary for all professionals working in child abuse. Opportunities are provided for members of the multi-disciplinary team and the RCAC staff.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTIONS CAMPAIGN- each year in April, a major campaign is launched by the RCAC to make the community aware of the magnitude of the problem in our region.

CHILD ADVOCACY- the Regional Child Advocacy Center is a member of the Alabama Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, the National Children's Alliance, and the American Professional Society for Abused Children.

RCAC, INC. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

A competitive analysis is an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of an organization. This analysis provides both an offensive and defensive strategic context through which to identify opportunities and threats. **Strengths** are internal characteristics, qualities, and capacities that are doing well and are part of the reason the organization's accomplishments. **Weaknesses** are internal qualities that need to be improved. **Opportunities** refer to external activities or trends that the organization may benefit from, connect with or take advantage of to grow or enhance its performance. **Threats** are external activities or trends that threaten the current and future success of the organization.

The following is a summary of the opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses of the Regional Child Advocacy Center, Inc. that was developed by the Board of Directors and Executive Director.

STRENGTHS

- Good director and staff
- Good reputation among stakeholders and the public
- Strong supportive board
- Multidisciplinary Team supportive and committed
- Fundraising increases past few years
- Central location of main facility
- Satellite sites recently added
- Almost Home program unique in Alabama
- Good physical facilities
- Support from governmental entities
- Increased safety and protection of children due to RCAC's work

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of awareness of needs and services, especially in Choctaw County
- Need web site for RCAC
- Lack of pediatric services locally
- More prevention services needed in schools, other community groups, and with juvenile offenders
- Need more forensic interviewers
- Poor support group participation
- Need to study care of special needs children at Almost Home
- Need more local training opportunities for Multidisciplinary Team

OPPORTUNITIES

A Juvenile Sex Offender Trainer is available with support of the Juvenile Court
Technology available to increase awareness
Specialized funding through industries and other sources

THREATS

Economy
Loss of court system funding
Potential loss of Department of Human Resources staff
Lack of transportation/child care prevent client/victim participation in support programs
Slow judicial process for court cases increases trauma for victims
Culture of less citizen participation and financial support from community groups and organizations

ELEMENTS OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: To expand prevention services.

| Strategies (What will be done) | Responsibilities (Who will do it) | Resources (How will we support it) | Benchmarks (Timeline) |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|
| Hire a part-time Prevention Coordinator. | Board Finance Committee will determine the cost of this position as a part-time employee and as a contract position. Executive Director and Board Personnel Comm. will decide on the type of position, develop a job description and complete the hiring process. | Funding will be required to pay salary or contractual fees for the position | By 4/1/13 |
| Explore the feasibility of starting an out-patient juvenile sex offender program (to address recidivism). | Executive Director and MDT members will identify local agencies, individuals and groups who can collaborate with the RCAC to develop a program. Executive Director will coordinate meeting(s) with identified partners to determine feasibility of such a program in this region. | No additional funding required. RCAC Executive Director can complete these responsibilities during regular work hours. | By 10/1/12 |

Goal 2: FUNDING: To insure a level of funding necessary for the RCAC, Inc. to achieve its mission.

| Strategies (What will be done) | Responsibilities (Who will do it) | Resources (How will we support it) | Benchmarks (Timeline) |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| Increase funds generated through the | Auction Committee will explore ways to make the event larger to generate more funds, i.e. going to | No funding needed. Any costs of contacts by | By 2/1/13 |

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| yearly fundraiser (Dinner & Auction). | a larger venue, increasing the number of sponsors, obtaining additional live auction items, etc. | committee members will be absorbed by the individual member. | |
| Include donation capacity when developing website. | Website developer will include donation capacity. | Funds will be required to add this capacity to a website | By 3/1/13 |
| Seek additional funding from city and county governments in Wash. and Choctaw Co. during annual budget-development. | Executive Director will send letters requesting funding to government entities. Board Member from the targeted county and ED will follow-up with a face to face meeting during their budget development period. | Letters soliciting support will be mailed annually | By 8/30/12 and then annually |
| Request funding from faith based associations in the region. | RCAC Victim Advocate will identify faith based associations in the region. Executive Director will develop a strategy to approach these groups to present RCAC, Inc. as a local mission opportunity | No funding needed only staff time. | 12/31/12 |

Goal 3: To increase public awareness of reporting requirements and services available to victims of child abuse and neglect in Washington, Choctaw and Clarke Counties through RCAC, Inc.

| Strategies (What will be done) | Responsibilities (Who will do it) | Resources (How will we support it) | Benchmarks (Timeline) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| Develop a website for the agency. | Committee composed of Board Members and RCAC Victim Advocate will determine content of website and recommend website developer. | Funding will be required to contract with website developer and then funds will need to be budgeted each year | By 12/31/12 |

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| | Executive Director will contract with local website developer to create, maintain and update website. | for maintenance and updating of website. | |
| Increase educational presentations to diverse groups, i.e. Hispanic groups, African American churches & Women's Conferences. | ED will identify diverse groups and schedule educational presentations. Executive Director and /or Victim Advocate will provide these presentations. | Funds for mileage will be paid through this budgeted item for both staff members. Educational materials will be purchased through ADECA/VOCA grant and any additional materials will be purchased as a budgeted item. | Minimum of 4 annually |
| Provide information on how to report child abuse to the community at large. | Committee composed of Board members and Victim Advocate will determine best method of distribution of this information, i.e. mass mailing, distribute to groups, etc. Committee will also develop the information to be included and the vehicle, i.e. pamphlet, postcard, information card or sheet, etc. | Staff time as well as funding for the distribution and printing of the material. | By 10/1/12 |

Date Approved by Board of Directors _____

Executive Director's Signature _____

Board Chairperson's Signature _____

