

National statistics show 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18.

Our mission is our kids.

We are a non-profit, charitable organization that delivers a broad range of support services to child victims of abuse and their care givers. We provide an environment that encourages healing and facilitates successful prosecution of alleged offenders.



Mission Kids

Child Advocacy Center of
Montgomery County
PO Box 413
Blue Bell, PA 19422
www.missionkidscac.org
(484)687-2990

We are conveniently located in
Central Montgomery County.

***Please call for driving
directions.***



Mission Kids is an associate member of the National Children's Alliance.



**MISSION
KIDS**

Child Advocacy Center of
Montgomery County

Family Information Guide

www.missionkidscac.org

Child Abuse in Montgomery County

There is no corner of our county untouched by child abuse. According to a 2009 report, there were almost 750 cases of suspected child abuse investigated in Montgomery County, including allegations of serious physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, and serious physical neglect to children. These cases cut across all geographic, economic, racial, and ethnic boundaries in Montgomery County.

What is a Child Advocacy Center?

A child advocacy center (CAC) provides a safe, child-friendly environment where child victims of abuse come to be interviewed about their experience by a forensic interviewer who is specially trained to speak to children about difficult subjects. The interviewer will make your child as comfortable as possible while they ask developmentally appropriate questions. An interviewer never forces a child to talk. A small, discrete camera records and broadcasts the interview into another room, where an MDT – a multi disciplinary child abuse investigation team – observes the interview. An MDT is generally made up of members of local law enforcement, the Montgomery County Detectives Bureau, the District Attorney's Office, and the Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth. Having these professionals together and allowing them all to view the interview at the same time both reduces the number of times a child victim has to tell his or her story, and facilitates the investigation and prosecution of child abuse.

Before the Interview:

What Should I Tell My Child?

- Give your child enough notice so he/she doesn't feel the appointment is a surprise, but don't give him/her too long a period to worry about it. Usually a day or two is enough time.
- Tell your child he/she will be meeting with a person who is a specialist in talking to children about difficult things and whose job it is to help protect children.
- Give your child permission to talk to the interviewer; i.e., *"It's OK to tell the interviewer what you told me (or whomever they told) happened to you."*
- Say that you want him/her to answer all the questions the best they can and to tell the truth.
- Reassure your child that he/she has not done anything wrong, and that you love and support him/her very much

What happens when we arrive?

You will be asked to have a seat in the child-friendly waiting room that contains toys, books, a TV, and a computer with child appropriate programming. The interviewer will come to the waiting room and introduce herself to your child. Shortly after, the same interviewer will return to bring your child back to the interview room. You must remain with your child at all times in the waiting area, and must remain at Mission Kids while your child is being interviewed. If you need to bring other children who are not being interviewed, they must be under your supervision at all times. You may not discuss your case in the waiting room with anyone, including Mission Kids staff and volunteers.

Can I Watch The Interview?

No one except a member of the Multi-Disciplinary team is allowed to observe the interview. If possible, try to bring a support person to wait with you in the waiting area.

After the Interview:

When the interview is over, the interviewer will return your child to you in the waiting room. You will have an opportunity to talk to a member of the investigative team. You can ask questions and raise any concerns. Mission Kids may make medical or therapeutic referrals.