



2018

*Impact
Report*

OUR MISSION

PROTECT. HEAL. CARE.

Willow Tree Cornerstone Child Advocacy Center is a community partnership to protect, heal and care for children who have been sexually or physically abused, neglected, or witnessed a crime.

Our child-friendly facility brings together a team of experts to evaluate and investigate each case. Families are assigned an advocate to help them through the entire process and children talk to someone who is specially trained to speak with kids about abuse.

At Willow Tree, a child can also be medically evaluated and receive ongoing counseling. We can also refer them to outside services and resources closer to where they live.

Willow Tree is a program of Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

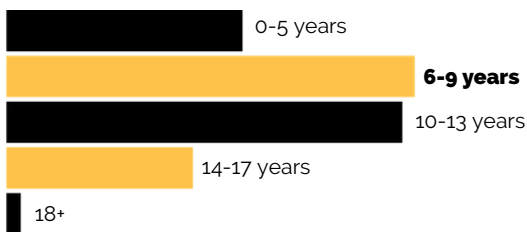


HELPING CHILDREN HEAL SUPPORT SNAPSHOT

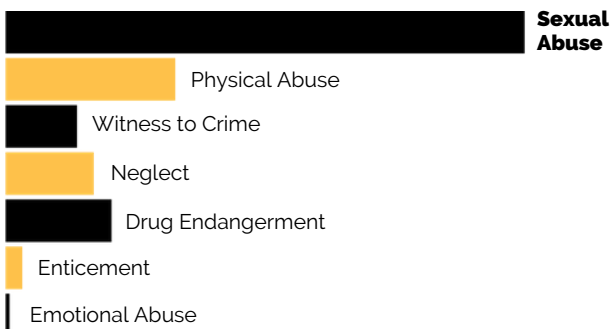
GENDER



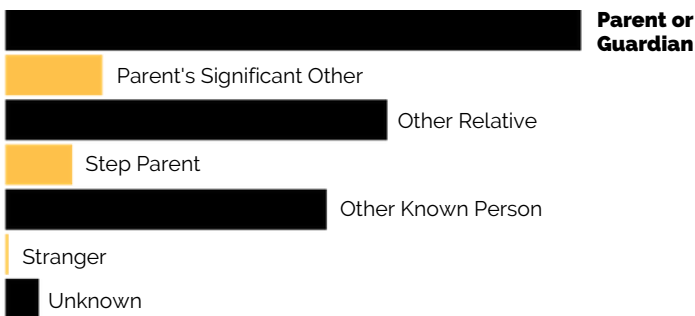
AGE



PRIMARY ALLEGATION



ALLEGED OFFENDER



763

**children were brought to
Willow Tree in 2018- a new record.**

ANOTHER RECORD YEAR

Willow Tree helped 21% more children in 2018 than 2017. This increase is due in large part to our community partners, who are utilizing Willow Tree more often.

According to a 2018 review of law enforcement data, Willow Tree was utilized in 93% of all child sexual abuse cases and 88% of physical abuse cases in Brown County in 2017.

We're proud of those numbers. But there is more work to be done. With your help, we can make sure 100% of child abuse victims in Brown County are brought to Willow Tree. And, that more children from surrounding areas can access our child-friendly approach.

***Our typical child is a 12-year-old girl who was sexually abused by a parent or other relative.**



ADVOCACY

A SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

An advocate is someone from Willow Tree or Family Services' Sexual Assault Center who provides support and information to children and their non-offending family members or caregivers. This support is offered at Willow Tree and continues throughout the entire process that may follow after abuse or neglect is reported.

Our advocates make sure each child and family receive the resources and referrals they need to begin to heal. Advocates also maintain contact with families to provide them with updates on an investigation and to offer ongoing support, which can include accompanying families to court for hearings or if the case goes to trial.

708

families received the personal support of an advocate.

182

families received help navigating the legal system in 2018.

HELPING CHILDREN & FAMILIES FEEL SAFE

An advocate may spend several years working with a family. The advocate checks in, listens to the family's concerns, and helps them find a way forward.

For Tiffany*, a mom of four, this support has lasted over 7 years.

Tiffany first brought her children to Willow Tree in 2011 for allegations of physical abuse by their father, Tiffany's ex-husband. The children were each interviewed and medically evaluated, but the case didn't result in charges and unsupervised visits with their dad continued.

The family's advocate, Jodi, kept in touch with Tiffany after that day. More reports of abuse followed, but nothing that rose to a criminal level. That was until the family returned to Willow Tree in 2018.

12-year-old *Alyssa had red marks around her neck. Our nurse would later confirm these marks as being indicative of abuse. Alyssa's brother and sisters were also interviewed about what happened.

Alyssa's case did result in charges and her dad was ordered not to have any contact with her. This order didn't apply to her siblings.

Tiffany feared for her other children's safety but didn't know what to do next. Jodi had a solution. She helped Tiffany file a restraining order for supervised contact only with their dad.

Jodi accompanied Tiffany and the kids when the request went to court. Jodi remembers the youngest child crying, telling the judge that she loves her dad but doesn't want him to hurt them anymore. The family's request was granted.

Tiffany says she wouldn't have known to take this step without Jodi's help. Thanks to your support, the children are comfortable spending time with their dad in a way that makes them feel safe. Their dad was also ordered to take anger management classes and is learning healthy ways to cope with stress around his children.

*Names and other identifying information has been changed to protect the client's privacy.

CHILD FORENSIC INTERVIEWS PURSUING JUSTICE

Our child forensic interviewers are specially trained to ask children non-leading, non-suggestive questions that are developmentally sensitive. Their goal is to get the most accurate information possible while helping the child feel safe and comfortable.

Investigating agencies observe the child's interview from another room, as it is being recorded. This minimizes further trauma that, in the past, a child may have experienced through telling and retelling their story multiple times at multiple agencies or in court.

655

Children were interviewed at Willow Tree in 2018, the most in a single year.

62%

came from Brown County, followed by Shawano and Oconto Counties.



A WEIGHT LIFTED OFF THEIR SHOULDERS

The interview can be the start of a child's healing process. It was for two sisters we'll call Megan and Ella, ages 9 and 12.

The girls came to Willow Tree with their mom and dad.

Ella had disclosed that she was being sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend. She had told her dad, who told police. The family was concerned that something had also happened to Megan. But they didn't know what.

Ella could sense her little sister's nerves and bravely volunteered to talk to Kristie, one of our child forensic interviewers, first. They went into an interview room to talk one-on-one. Ella told Kristie this was "very hard to talk about," but knew she finally had to say something. She went on to describe years of significant sexual abuse by her mother's boyfriend. She said he told her that no one would believe her if she told and that she would get into trouble.

Like so many children who come to Willow Tree, Ella told Kristie she wanted to tell sooner but didn't know how. She said telling someone felt like a weight had been lifted off her chest. She said she now knows that something also happened to her sister Megan. But she didn't know what.

Megan was still nervous when she entered the interview room. Kristie gave her some putty to play with and talked about more relaxed topics to start. Once Megan was comfortable, she disclosed to Kristie very similar sexual abuse as her sister. She told Kristie she always wondered if the same thing was happening to Ella, too. She told Kristie it "felt good" to let it all out.

The girls looked visibly relieved after their interviews, as if years of stress had been lifted away. They were laughing and hugging each other. Based on the girls' statements, the mother's boyfriend was arrested and charged within hours.

When the girls returned for their medical evaluations the following week, they didn't have to tell the nurse why they were there, because they had already talked to Kristie about it. The family says the girls have been more relaxed and confident since their interviews and finally feel safe again at home.

Thanks to your support, Megan and Ella are beginning to heal and are looking forward to a brighter future!



ON-SITE MEDICAL PROTECTING YOUNG BODIES

Willow Tree is proud to partner with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin to provide on-site medical evaluations in our child-friendly exam room. Our nurse practitioner, Jen, works for Children's Hospital and specializes in the medical evaluation of child maltreatment. She looks for signs indicating sexual or physical abuse or neglect, and her findings can later be used as evidence if the case goes to court.

Many of the children Jen sees for sexual abuse voice concerns about their bodies and how they appear to others. During an exam, Jen can reassure these children that they look like a normal 8-year-old girl or 9-year-old boy. She can also collect samples to test for sexually transmitted infections to ensure children are healthy and get the treatment they need to heal.

229
**children received a medical
evaluation to check for signs of abuse,
neglect or drug endangerment.**

Jen can also collect urine samples that are sent out and tested for trace amounts of illegal substances. These tests occasionally show a child has been exposed to cocaine, alcohol or other drugs. Those findings often provide the evidence needed for Child Protection to move a child into a more safe environment.

COUNSELING

BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES

Helping a child heal from the trauma of sexual or physical abuse or neglect can be complex. Our therapist often meets with a child for at least six months to a year. This is longer than the average length of treatment at many outpatient clinics, due to the nature of the trauma these children have experienced.

For one boy, the experience of being sexually assaulted left him feeling sad, guilty, and believing he would never achieve his dream of becoming a professional athlete. We'll call him Lucas. He told his therapist, Amy, that he felt like the only kid in his 5th grade class who had experienced something like what had happened to him.

During therapy, Amy found it helpful to Lucas to talk about celebrities who had been sexually assaulted. She pointed out that they had made a big difference in other people's lives by talking about what happened, and had accomplished great things. For about a year, Amy helped Lucas work through his trauma. Lucas eventually felt comfortable sharing his story with his dad, so they could process it together.

By the end of the year, Lucas was feeling better and less depressed. He was participating in the sports he loved and felt empowered to keep chasing his dream of playing professionally. Lucas could not have come this far without your support!



PREVENTION EDUCATION

EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Prevention is an important part of who we are at Willow Tree. Our prevention specialist, Miss Becca, goes into local schools to teach children important measures to help prevent sexual or physical abuse, including whom a child should tell if it's happening.

Starting in preschool, Miss Becca uses child-friendly explanations to teach kids the difference between safe touches and unsafe touches, and good and bad secrets. She also helps children identify trusted adults who they can talk to if someone is hurting them.

With older children, Miss Becca explores topics related to sexual assault, harassment and consent to help students understand the importance of respecting others and building healthy relationships.

8,071

students learned measures to help prevent or report abuse or neglect.



A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

WE'RE ABLE TO HELP CHILDREN BECAUSE OF YOU!

\$10,000 +

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of Northeastern
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♥ In memory of Jim Rivett

IN MEMORIUM

REMEMBERING JIM RIVETT



Jim Rivett was a tireless advocate for children. He used his creativity to the benefit of everyone in our community - including the children and families at Willow Tree.

Both Willow Tree and our parent organization, Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, will remember Jim for his incredible generosity and loyal support, and for his contributions as a member of our Willow Tree Advisory Board.



YOUR IMPACT

GIVING COMFORT TO FAMILIES

Your support of Willow Tree gives comfort and safety to children and families during what is often a very emotional, stressful and frightening time in their lives.

We often ask families what they appreciate most about Willow Tree. These are some of their responses:

"Everyone was kind, they made the process easy."

"The help and support."

"The information and resources."

"How kind and understanding the staff was."

95%

of parents and caregivers surveyed said their child felt safe at Willow Tree.

100%

of parents and caregivers surveyed described our staff as friendly and pleasant.



OUR PARTNERS MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

Ashwaubenon Public Safety
Brown County Corporation Counsel
Brown County District Attorney's Office
Brown County Human Services
Brown County Sheriff's Department
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
De Pere Police Department
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
Golden House

Green Bay Police Department
Oneida Police Department
SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners)
Sexual Assault Center of Family Services
St. Vincent Hospital
Wrightstown Police Department

OUR REACH AREAS SERVED

(Listed in order of number of children served)

3,000+

**children have been helped at Willow
Tree since our opening in 2011.**

Brown County
Shawano County
Oconto County
Menominee Reservation
Manitowoc County
Marinette County
Kewaunee County
Outagamie County
Waupaca County
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