



LUCAS COUNTY
**CHILDREN
SERVICES**

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CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

(TOLEDO, OH – April 1, 2021) — A partnership among child-serving agencies, a local hospital and area media organizations is helping to raise awareness about the impact that domestic violence is having on children in Lucas County.

Lucas County Children Services (LCCS), the Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center (FCAPC), YWCA of Northwest Ohio, Mercy Health, WTVG-TV, Cumulus Media and Lamar are working together to remind Lucas County residents that, “Family violence doesn’t just affect adults; chances are that kids are victims, too.”

FCAPC reported more than 6,000 incidents of domestic violence in 2018, the most recent year for which data is available. Ninety-four percent of individuals charged with domestic violence in Lucas County that year lived in Toledo, and Lucas County far outpaced the number of cases in Cuyahoga (2,477), Franklin (3,481), and Hamilton (1,780) Counties¹.

LCCS case data reported that one-third of all family cases opened each of the last five years listed domestic violence as a contributing factor for agency involvement, second only to drug abuse. Nearly 2,000 Lucas County children were confirmed to have been victims of child abuse or neglect in Lucas County in 2020. During that same period of time (calendar 2020), the FCAPC’s Children’s Advocacy Center served 424 children by providing counseling, therapy referrals, medical exams, and forensic interviews, according to Dr. Christie Jenkins, CEO.

The Ohio Domestic Violence Network reported that in the period between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020, there were 77 domestic violence cases with 109 fatalities across 29 counties in Ohio. Eighteen percent of the cases involved children at the scene, and four children died from injuries sustained in a domestic violence incident². They YWCA reported a 33 percent increase in calls to its domestic violence crisis hotline from 2019 to 2020.

“Just a few weeks ago, we had children shot and killed as a result of family violence, said Robin Reese, LCCS executive director. “Parents who lack the resources to cope with stressful

¹ Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation. (2019). *Domestic Violence Report* [Report]. Columbus, OH.

² Ohio Domestic Violence Network. (2020). *Ohio Domestic Violence Fatalities, July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020* [Brochure]. Columbus, OH.



situations, or to leave unsafe relationships, leave the door open for children to witness or become innocent victims of violent acts,” she added.

The YWCA of Northwest Ohio, the only emergency domestic violence shelter in Lucas County, explains that young people who experience domestic violence at home experience difficulty at school, regressive behavior, withdrawal from friends and activities, or unruly behavior. Without help, boys go on to become ten times more likely to abuse a partner in adulthood, and girls become six times more likely to be sexually abused, compared to their peers, according to Lisa McDuffie, YWCA president and CEO.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Psychological Association (APA), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) agree that increased stress among parents or other adult caregivers is often a major predictor of physical abuse and neglect of children³. The addition of stressors brought by the recent COVID-19 pandemic has created more opportunities for friction between adults, as well as anxiety-driven behaviors in children that could lead to abuse and neglect.

The campaign includes electronic billboards, TV and radio spots, digital ads, a website (lucaskids.net/campaigns-special-projects/) and information cards, and will be prominently featured during the month of April, which is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

If you need to escape a domestic violence relationship or if you need help to stop being abusive, contact the Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center at 419-244-3035 ext. 0, or the YWCA of Northwest Ohio at 419-241-7386.

If you believe that a child is at risk of abuse or neglect due to domestic violence or for any other reason, call 911 or Lucas County Children Services at 419-213-2273.

About Lucas County Children Services

The mission of Lucas County Children Services is to lead the community in the protection of children at risk of abuse and neglect. This is accomplished by working with families, service providers and community members to assess risk and coordinate community-based services resulting in safe, stable and permanent families for children.

(cont'd)

³ APA (2020) “How COVID-19 may increase domestic violence and child abuse” Retrieved at: <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/domestic-violence-child-abuse>

About Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center

The Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center was founded in 1974 by local pediatrician, Dr. Bernard Cullen, and a small group of concerned citizens, who saw first hand the devastating effects of child abuse. While child protection and law enforcement agencies have a crucial role in child protection, our founders had the foresight to see the need for additional community partners. From the compassion, dedication, and vision of this small group of people, an organization has evolved with dedicated professionals who diligently work to break the cycle of family violence. With offices in Lucas and Ottawa counties, Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center serves over 50,000 people each year.

About YWCA of Northwest Ohio

The YWCA of Northwest Ohio, working to meet the diverse needs of women and the elimination of racism, serves more than 15,000 individuals each year through various programs. The programs include: Domestic Violence Shelter, Rape Crisis Center, Child Care Resource and Referral, Youth Development, Long Term Housing, and Healthy Connections.

About Mercy Health

Mercy Health's commitment to fight domestic violence is evident through many programs which are designed to address various levels of need of families impacted by DV. The Mercy Health Toledo Trauma Recovery Center serves individuals and families who are victims of crime, which includes domestic violence. Through clinical case management, therapy services and victim advocacy patient needs are met.

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