

# Dallas County Children's Advocacy Council

FY2019

## Executive Summary



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### Dallas County Children's Advocacy Council (DCCAC)

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#### Mission Statement

*"To advocate that all children deserve the opportunity to live in a safe and positive environment so they may grow to reach their full potential."*

#### DCCAC History

The Dallas County Children's Advocacy Council was created 1985 for the primary purpose to undertake activities in furtherance of prevention of child abuse and neglect. The DCCAC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation under the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 504A, Code of Iowa.

#### DCCAC Guiding Principles

- Support evidenced based, research based, and best practices approaches
- Support the growth and learning needs of children
- Support the development of healthy sustaining families

### FY2019 Accomplishments

#### Dallas County Children's Advocacy Council

DCCAC was awarded a \$9,240 grant from Prevent Child Abuse Iowa that supported a Dallas County prevention program. In addition to programming, DCCAC provided the following public awareness and advocacy activities throughout Dallas County.

- Dallas County Board of Supervisors signed April is Child Abuse Prevention Month proclamation
- A prevent child abuse banner was placed on the Dallas County Courthouse lawn
- Dallas County Community Mixer
- 1,200 paper bags were donated by Hy-Vee and decorated with prevent child abuse information
- Various newspaper articles about child abuse prevention
- Fundraiser held with Papa Murphy's Pizza
- Sponsored Blue-Out Day on April 6, 2019

#### Sexual Abuse Prevention Education

*(Provided by Crisis Intervention and Advocacy Center)*

This year brought prevention efforts full circle as adults received sexual abuse prevention training the same time as their children. The conversations that were happening at home were inspiring and adults reported feeling more confident and comfortable answering difficult questions about sexual development and body safety. Prevention in action!

- 352 children served
- 74 adults served
- 60 educational sessions provided



## Child Abuse in Iowa

Annually, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) provides child abuse data. The data reveals trends in child abuse, which assists Prevent Child Abuse Iowa in determining the State's needs/priorities pertaining to child abuse prevention efforts.

In Iowa, for 2018 there were 35,029 child abuse reports of which 7,136 family assessments were completed and 28,071 child abuse assessments completed. There were 11,568 abused children in 2018. This is an increase of 332 (or 3%) more children from the number of children abused in 2017. Of the 11,568 children that were abused, 46.9% were under the age of 5.

## Child Abuse in Dallas County

The Iowa Department of Human Services provides data by County.

There were 125 children abused in 2018 of which 42.4% were under the age of 5.

Below is additional child abuse data by category for Dallas County.

### Abused Children in Dallas County by Year

Dallas County ranks **99th**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
151	160	117	145	139	118	111	122	130	<b>125</b>

### Presence of Illegal Drugs Cases in Dallas County by Year

Dallas County ranks **93rd**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
2	4	4	2	16	14	11	13	12	<b>7</b>

### Physical Injury Cases in Dallas County by Year

Dallas County ranks **81st**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
26	33	34	27	17	41	16	27	46	<b>29</b>

### Sexual Abuse Cases in Dallas County by Year

Dallas County ranks **81st**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
9	10	5	8	7	13	9	15	30	<b>18</b>

### Sex Offender Cases in Dallas County by Year

Dallas County ranks **61st**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	<b>10</b>

### Demographics and Indicators

	Total Population	0-17 Population	Child Poverty Rate	% of single parent families	% individuals receiving food assistance	% of students eligible for free or reduced school lunch	Unemployment rate
Dallas County	84,516	23,803	4.8%	18.3%	4.1%	22.4%	1.7%
Iowa	3,134,693	730,731	12.6%	31.0%	11.6%	41.3%	2.5%
USA	326,771,203	72,571,750	18.4%	34.4%	12.9%	43.6%	4.9%

Iowa Kids Count 2017

## Additional Data

Iowa Department of Human Services at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/reports/child-abuse-statistics> has more information related to child abuse statistics.



## Child Abuse Definitions

Child abuse is defined through state laws, so there is no federal standard throughout the country.

In Iowa, the Legislature defines "child abuse" to include the following harm:

- Neglect (failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or other care necessary for a child's health and well-being)
- Intended physical injury
- Sexual abuse of a child
- Presence of an illegal drug in a child's body as a result of actions or neglect
- Allowing a known sex offender, who is not the child's biological parent or the caretaker's spouse, custody or access to a child
- Manufacturing a dangerous substance in a child's presence
- Mental injury to a child
- Providing access to or showing obscene material to a child
- Sex trafficking ("the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing or soliciting of a person for the propose of commercial sexual activity")

According to Iowa law, the harm of a child is considered "child abuse" when it's caused by the actions or neglect of someone who is responsible for the child's well-being. The following individuals can be charged with child abuse:

- Parent or guardian
- Foster parent
- Health care or residential treatment employee
- Child care employee
- A relative or anyone living with a child, who is responsible for his or her supervision

## Societal Costs of Child Abuse

Children who are raised in safe, nurturing environments are more likely to grow into responsible, contributing members of society.

**For every \$50 spent to treat child abuse, only \$1 is spent to prevent it from occurring.**

Studies show investing in parental support and education is less expensive and more effective than trying to treat the effects of child abuse. Those who are subject to child abuse face emotional, cognitive, physical and behavioral development challenges at higher rates than children who aren't abused.

Specifically, children who are abused are more likely to:

- Perform poorly in school
- Develop unhealthy relationships
- Attempt suicide
- Suffer from:
  - Attention deficits
  - Depression
  - Violent aggression
  - Obesity
  - Alcoholism
  - Drug usage
  - Cigarette addiction

## Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACEs)

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACEs) conducted by Dr. Robert Anda and Dr. Vincent Felitti revealed these major societal costs that result from childhood trauma. Iowa is one of 19 states taking action based on the ACEs study. ACEs data is being collected this year and a steering committee is looking at how to use the data to best address childhood adversity in the state

The monetary costs associated with child abuse are staggering as well. An economic impact analysis study released by Prevent Child Abuse America in April 2012 estimates the cost of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. at \$80 billion, or nearly \$64,000 per child, this year. These estimates include direct costs (hospitalizations, mental health treatment, child welfare system, and law enforcement) as well as indirect costs (special education, early intervention, adult homelessness, mental health and health care, juvenile and adult criminal justice, and lost work productivity).

**What is clear from these studies is that child abuse affects everyone.** We can significantly reduce the costs associated with treating child abuse by investing in programs that prevent child abuse from happening, but it will take everyone working together to support Iowa's families.

## Iowa Department of Human Services Definitions

The child protection process starts with a report being received by a Centralized Intake system of the Iowa Department of Human Services. For the unit to accept a report as a possible case of child abuse, the allegations must involve:

- A victim who is less than 18 at the time of the alleged harm
- A possible perpetrator who is a "caretaker"
- An allegation that one or more of certain specified harms had occurred

These are the three core requirements for a case to be accepted. The only exception regarding the caretaker requirement involves cases of alleged sexual abuse, where any household member – not just a caretaker – can be a perpetrator.

The Iowa Department of Human Services began its *Differential Response (DR)* System in January 2014. The new system consists of two pathways, Family Assessment (FA) and Child Abuse Assessment (CA), to respond to allegations of neglect and abuse. The new FA, pathway responds to less serious allegations of child neglect. Differential Response did not impact the criteria for accepting a report for assessment. Code changes did impact worker response times, the labeling of perpetrators and victims, and report conclusion categories for less serious neglect cases following the acceptance of a report for assessment. In addition, Code changes established a firm path for cases to be re-assigned from the FA pathway to CA pathway. These decisions were based on the premise that safety of a child is first and foremost in a FA and CA.

*Founded (Confirmed and Placed)* means that more than half of the available evidence shows that abuse occurred, and the abuse DOES meet the criteria for placement on the Central Abuse Registry. This assessment summary will be kept on the Registry for ten years (or ten years after the most recent confirmed abuse when the same victim or person responsible is placed on the Registry). This summary will be sealed for eight years and then destroyed. A summary involving founded sexual abuse is sealed for thirty years and then destroyed.

*Confirmed* means that more than half of the available evidence shows that abuse occurred, but the abuse DOES NOT meet the criteria for placement on the Central Abuse Registry. The child abuse assessment summary is retained five years from date of intake or five years from the date of closure of the service record, whichever occurs later.

*Not Confirmed* means that it was not possible to determine, by more than half of the available evidence that abuse occurred. The child abuse assessment summary is retained five years from date of intake or five years from the date of closure of the service record, whichever occurs later.



# 25 WAYS TO BE A LOVING PARENT

Every day, you show your children in dozens of ways how you feel about them. Here are some new suggestions - from serious to silly - to show your kids how much you love them.

- Help your child with their schoolwork.
- Giggle together - share silly knock-knock jokes.
- Bury a family time capsule and dig it up five years later.
- Have a backward dinner - serve dessert first!
- Look through your family photo albums together.
- Ask your child to draw a portrait of your family and then frame it.
- Schedule regular Family Meetings where everyone gets to share their opinion.
- Start a once-a-season parent/child date night complete with dinner and a movie.
- Give your child the gift of culture - take them to a museum, symphony, or play.
- Start a collection together - anything from coins to seashells will work.
- Take family walks after dinner.
- Sit down at the table together to eat meals.
- Give your child choices about what to wear, eat, do, etc.
- Set realistic rules and expectations and make sure your child understands them.
- Be a good role model.
- Find time each day to talk one-on-one with your child.
- Praise and encourage your child daily.
- Give your children age-appropriate responsibilities.
- Put a funny note in their lunch box.
- Stick to your rules and be fair.
- Be patient!
- Let them know when you catch them being good.
- Tell them how thankful you are they are your children.
- Trust your child and let them know you respect them.
- Hug your child every day.





**Please support child abuse prevention in Dallas County with ~~~**

*Pizza for Prevention*

**Papa Murphy's Take 'N' Bake Pizza**

**2180 NW 1568 Street, #113 – Clive**

**Tuesday, April 21, 2020**

**4:00pm – 7:00pm**

*10% of sales will go towards  
child abuse prevention  
in Dallas County*

*Thank you!!!*

