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**CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS SEE  
11.26% INCREASE IN CHILD VICTIMS SERVED**

*WVCAN Releases 2017 State Aggregate Data*

Charleston, WV — Today, West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN) releases its State Aggregate Data for the 2017 fiscal year. The data in the report reflects service from West Virginia's 21 Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) who provided official service to 40 of 55 counties in the state and courtesy services to other counties.

This past fiscal year CACs served 3,914 children – a 66% increase in the last five years. One in every 100 children in WVCAN's service area were seen by a child advocacy center last year. Thirty-four percent of the children served by CACs were under the age of 6, and 19% of children are reported or suspected to have a disability.

Most of children served by WV CACs were there because of allegations of sexual abuse – 62%. Forty percent of alleged offenders were the child's parent, and 99% of alleged offenders were someone the child knows. There were 548 cases with charges filed, and 242 individuals convicted for crimes against children.

Caregivers were surveyed after receiving services and 99% agreed "If I knew anyone else who was dealing with a situation like the one my family faced, I would tell that person about the center."

The report includes data on victim demographics, alleged offender demographics, reported vs. disclosed abuse breakdown, services performed, criminal justice response, and CAC income budget breakdown. The full statewide data report can be found at <http://wvcn.org/media/>.

"West Virginia CACs are seeing more children than ever before. Kids are becoming more aware of the issue and the services CACs provide, and ultimately are more comfortable telling someone when abuse happens," said Emily Chittenden-Laird, Executive Director of the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network.

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**West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN)** provides statewide leadership in the fight against child abuse while working side-by-side with the 21 Child Advocacy Centers throughout the state. WVCAN provides training, technical assistance, leadership, legislative and policy advocacy, and overall coordination to Child Advocacy Centers around the state. A CAC is a child-friendly facility in which child protection, criminal justice, and child treatment professionals work together to investigate abuse, hold offenders accountable, and help children heal. Rather than having a child taken from agency to agency

to endure multiple interviews, the CAC model brings the system to the child for an effective, child-centered, healing process. As the statewide authority on multidisciplinary approaches to supporting child victims of abuse, WVCAN's purpose is to empower local communities to provide comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse.