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WVCAN RELEASES 2021 STATE AGGREGATE DATA

Charleston, WV — Today, the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN) released its Statewide Data Report for the 2021 fiscal year. The data in the report reflects service from West Virginia’s 21 Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) which provided official service to 44 of 55 counties in the state. A CAC provides a safe, child-friendly facility where child protection, criminal justice, and child treatment professionals work together to investigate abuse, hold offenders accountable, and help children heal.

To ensure that every child had access to needed resources and support during this time, West Virginia’s 21 Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) remained open. During this past fiscal year, CACs served 4,604 children – a 40% increase in new children served in the last five years.

Highlights from the report include:

- 54% of the children served were there because of allegations of sexual abuse
- 27% of the children served by CACs were six years old or younger
- 94% of alleged offenders were someone the child knew
- 622 cases had charges filed
- 202 individuals were convicted for crimes against children
- 322,827 children (90% of the state’s population) live in a county officially served by a CAC
- 35,883 children (10% of the state’s population) live in a county without official CAC coverage

Caregivers visiting CACs are asked to take a survey about their experience. 98% of caregivers surveyed said if they knew anyone else who was dealing with a situation like the one their family faced, they would tell that person about the child advocacy center.

The report includes data on victim demographics, alleged offender demographics, reported vs. disclosed abuse, services performed, criminal justice response, and CAC income budget breakdown. The full statewide data report can be found at [here](#).

“As you can see, the number of children we serve is increasing every year. This data helps show we aren’t done elevating the conversation about child abuse in West Virginia,” said Kate Flack, Chief Executive Officer of the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network. “We must continue and expand our support of West Virginia’s Child Advocacy Centers, who are on the front lines serving child survivors of abuse and ensuring they receive hope, healing, and justice.”

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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 coordinated the response around 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.

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