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Local United Ways provide grants to benefit abused children

SAUKVILLE, WI (January 12, 2018) – Representatives from United Way of Northern Ozaukee and United Way of Washington County met today to announce plans to support abused children by providing funding for the new Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center, located in Saukville at 134 S. Foster Drive.

The child advocacy center provides a trauma-informed environment where partners collaboratively investigate abuse, support families, and provide children with a safe place to be heard.

“It’s a shocking reality, but hundreds of children in our community are victims of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse every year,” said Kristin Brandner, executive director of United Way of Washington County.

“Our local United Ways recognized this growing and unmet need,” said Barbara Bates-Nelson, executive director of United Way of Northern Ozaukee. “United, we’re taking action to ensure that abused children—some of our most vulnerable community members—have the support and advocacy they need.”

United Way of Northern Ozaukee County and United Way of Washington County are each investing \$33,500 to support programs for local children. The child advocacy center model is considered best-practice nationally because it allows professionals to obtain legally-defensible information while minimizing further trauma.

“It’s all about putting the child first,” said Amanda Didier, executive director of Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center. “Our comprehensive program is unique because we bring all the partners involved in child abuse investigations into one family-friendly, neutral environment. We’re able to provide the children and families with services they need to heal and thrive after enduring traumatic events.”

Prior to Lakeshore’s opening, there were no child advocacy centers in Ozaukee, Washington, Dodge, Sheboygan, or Fond du Lac counties. As a result, families had to travel to other counties, many of which are already struggling to handle their own caseloads.

“The opioid epidemic is continuing to hit hard, and children are often the victims when someone in the home is using drugs,” Bates-Nelson said. “We’re excited to join this regional partnership to strengthen our community and help victims of abuse.”

About United Way of Northern Ozaukee

United Way of Northern Ozaukee is a champion for the health, education and financial stability of every person in Ozaukee County. We work to improve lives by mobilizing people and leveraging our vast community network to raise money, engage leaders in solving our community’s most daunting challenges. We invest in resources that produce measurable improvements. For more information about United Way Northern Ozaukee’s work, or to join our fight to create meaningful, measurable and lasting change for people throughout our county, visit unitedwayno.org

About United Way of Washington County

United Way of Washington County provides resources and solutions for health and human service needs in communities throughout Washington County, Wisconsin. With a focus on Education, Financial Stability, and Health, United Way’s mission is to improve lives and community conditions in measurable and lasting ways. For more information about United Way of Washington County’s work, or to join our fight to create meaningful, measurable and lasting change for people throughout our county, visit UnitedWayOfWashingtonCounty.org

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