

## Goals of Wendy's Place

- To provide a coordinated, comprehensive response to allegations of child abuse, in order to minimize the number of times your child will need to be interviewed
- To do the best possible job investigating what, if anything, has happened
- To provide a child-friendly, safe environment for your child during the investigative process
- To make the investigative process as comfortable as possible for your child
- To arrange services to help you and your child begin to heal

## Contact Information

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## Wendy's Place

Child Advocacy Center  
Information

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## Wendy's Place Children's Advocacy Center

Wendy's Place is a multidisciplinary partnership of professionals established for the investigation of allegations of child abuse, and to insure the coordination of services for children and their families. Wendy's Place strives to reduce the trauma of the investigation process by offering a safe, child-friendly environment where videotaped interviews of children are conducted. The interviews are conducted by specially trained DCF investigators and law enforcement personnel, using a culturally sensitive model. An advocate is available to provide information and support to the non-offending parents or guardians while the interview is taking place.

Wendy's Place is an Associate Member of the National Children's Alliance and a member of the Connecticut Children's Alliance.

## The Investigative Process

Children are interviewed at Wendy's Place by a specially trained DCF investigator or law enforcement officer. The interview will be videotaped and the videotape will remain in the custody of law enforcement as evidence. If necessary, the child will be referred for a medical evaluation.



Medical evaluations are performed at Windham Community Memorial Hospital and Day Kimball Hospital. The law enforcement officer and the DCF investigator will continue their investigation, and interview necessary parties.

The team will discuss their findings, and decide how to proceed with the case. DCF will review their investigation and develop a case management plan.

The State's Attorney will review the results of the police investigation and determine if there is sufficient evidence to begin a criminal action against the alleged offender.

## Who's Who at Wendy's Place

### Law Enforcement

State and local police are responsible for the criminal investigation. Their role is to interview witnesses and suspects, collect evidence, apprehend perpetrators and assist in prosecution.



### Dept. of Children and Families (DCF)

DCF is the state agency responsible for protecting children from abuse and neglect. The role of the DCF investigator is to assess issues regarding safety and protection of children.

### State's Attorney's Office

The primary role of the State's Attorney is to prosecute criminal cases. When an application for a warrant is submitted to the State's Attorney's Office by law enforcement, the State's Attorney will review many factors before deciding how to proceed.

### Advocate

The advocate's primary responsibility is to provide information and support to the child and the non-offending parent or caretaker. The advocate can provide crisis intervention and crisis counseling for victims and non-offending family members, as well as providing follow-up with appropriate referrals for therapy, medical support, and general assistance. The advocate can also provide on-going support for the family, including legal and medical support and preparation. The advocate believes that parents who are supported will, in turn, support their children.

### Mental Health Services

Therapy and clinical services for children and their families are available through the Child Guidance Clinic at United Services, Inc. Please call their intake office in Columbia (serving the Willimantic area) at (860) 228-4480 or in the Dayville area at (860) 774-2020 for more information.

## • Child Advocacy Centers National Model

Children's Advocacy Centers are community-based facilities providing a winning solution to caring for victims of severe child abuse.

What makes the Children's Advocacy Center model so effective is a unique multi-disciplinary community response to severe child abuse by enabling law enforcement, prosecutors, child protective services, and the medical and mental health professions to work together as a collaborative team to investigate and prosecute cases of child sexual abuse. As a result, CAC programs work to minimize trauma, break the cycle of abuse and provide communities with an added bonus: increased prosecution rates for perpetrators.

By recognizing the special needs of children, CAC programs work to minimize trauma, break the cycle of abuse and provide communities with an added bonus: increased prosecution rates for perpetrators.

Children's Advocacy Centers are community partnerships dedicated to a coordinated team approach by professionals pursuing the truth in child abuse investigations. By bringing together professionals from law enforcement, criminal justice, child protective services, victim advocacy agencies and the medical and mental health communities, CACs provide comprehensive services for child victims and their families.

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